

NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP



DAY 1

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my

aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou wilt be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

FIRST DAY MEDITATION

The Title Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Among the numerous titles under which Christian piety is pleased to invoke the Blessed Virgin, there are few that are as likely to lift our hearts and fill them with unlimited confidence as the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help, a name that pleases Her so. To convince you of this: consider, on the one hand, what the life of man on earth is, and on the other hand, what the name of Our Lady of Perpetual Help means. Truthfully, what is life but a chain of miseries, dangers, afflictions and labours? In the temporal order, who is exempt from illness or from poverty? Who is there who does not have to weep? In the spiritual order, who knows how, on every occasion, to be on guard against the great misfortune of sin, against the snares of lukewarmness, against the coaxing of temptations? Who does not weaken from time to time in the service of God, in the practice of virtue, and who does not tire at times in the path of good? Finally, what Christian does not tremble at the thought of the decisive and difficult moment of death, of the purifying fire of purgatory? In view of such miseries and necessities, the soul, overwhelmed, feels itself weakening and would like to burst into tears. But upon hearing the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help, it becomes serene; it takes courage and continues joyfully on its path toward eternity. Why? Because it then feels that its lamentations are not lost in a desert but that they find a gracious echo in the Heart of a Mother who desires and can help it. In truth, the Virgin of Perpetual Help means a remedy for all the evils that afflict us – a remedy not just for a day but perpetual, from the cradle to Heaven, help in everything and help at all times. Perpetual Help means consolation in afflictions, poverty, illness, and labour; strength to give up sin, whether mortal or venial, and not to fall into it again. Perpetual Help means fidelity in the service of the Lord and of the Virgin Herself, and therefore, final perseverance. Perpetual Help means courage in the practice of virtue; special protection in the terrible hour of death; prompt and efficacious relief in the dreadful prison where just souls, still indebted to Divine justice, suffer before entering the heavenly homeland. Perpetual Help means: that even when circumstances or situations occur where everything seems hopeless, there is still one certain recourse: the Protection of the Blessed Virgin.

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

“Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!”

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;
Come, therefore, I implore Thee:
Come hasten to assist me.
O Mother sweet and kind!

Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,
For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes
When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.

Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,
As fond farewell to Thee,
To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EJACULATORY PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual help, may your name never depart from my lips nor forsake my heart.

EXERCISE

A visit to the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, reciting ten Hail Marys and commending to Her all your necessities and those of your family.

PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! For the ingratitude with which, until now, I have repaid Thy mercies and those of God, I deserve, as just punishment, Thy depriving me of Thy favours; but, O my sweet Mother, no matter how great my ingratitude is, Thy kindness is even greater. Do not disdain, therefore, to help a poor sinner who confides in Thee! Thy heart overflows with charity for all and never has one heard it said that any unfortunate soul had left Thy feet without having his tears dried. Do not forget my miseries; intercede for me before the God of

goodness, Who refuses Thee nothing and prove once more that Thou art worthy of the sweet name of Perpetual Help.

EXAMPLE

During the last years of the 15th century, when the Turks were afflicting the Christians on the isle of Crete with bloody persecutions, a pious merchant was obliged to abandon his native soil forever and seek asylum under the skies of Italy.

The vessel that conveyed him had scarcely reached the high seas when it was lashed by a violent tempest, and in a few moments, the hurricane tore off its sails, and the raging waves destroyed its rudder. The crew, upon seeing their ship lost and made a plaything by the waves, terrified and struck with fear, awaited the death that would give the depths of the ocean for their tomb.

In the midst of that frightful scene, only the merchant of Crete appeared to be serene. There was courage in his words, and confidence glowed in his eyes. And as the fury increased, the pious traveller ran to the ship's interior, found his luggage, and, uttering sighs of hope, returned to the deck carrying in his hand the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

"Look," he exclaimed, addressing the afflicted crew: "Behold the star of the sea; behold the beacon of navigators. Let us invoke Her in our afflictions. She will save us." Upon saying these words, the merchant lifted the precious image before the terrified crew members, who grouped themselves on their knees around his feet.

"Petitions rise from the earth, and prodigies descend from heaven", according to Saint Augustine.

And sure enough: the travellers had hardly invoked Mary with that powerful cry of faith when the hurricane stopped the course of its winds, and the great ocean calmed its waves. The sun shone in the skies, and the ship, rocked by the gentle breeze, went on to drop its anchors on the beautiful shores of Italy.

This was the first wonder about the miraculous image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help manifested before the face of Christianity. She wanted to commence Her favours in a vanquished tempest, to teach us that, in all the torments of life, no matter how lost we feel ourselves to be, She will always be our life, our sweetness and our hope. Amen

May Our Lady Of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, my love, my Mother, My refuge and my life. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the

path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED

(Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O mary, my queen and mother, o most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

(Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family. Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all

those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen

DAY 2

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou will be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

SECOND DAY MEDITATION

Our Lady of Perpetual Help assists her devotee to cease sinning

Among men, titles are often more than vain designations that do not correspond to reality. In Mary, on the contrary, titles always express the most obvious truth. And Thus the Blessed Virgin is called and is truly the Perpetual Help of all the unfortunate who have recourse to Her. Consider, however, that there is one class of Unfortunates for whom the most loving Mother seems to reserve her most tender glances and whom She makes a special object of

Her most compassionate concern: they are the poor sinners, and it is easy to understand the reason behind that predilection.

The greater a child's misfortune, the more maternal love increases. Well then, what greater misfortune is there than being separated from Jesus and chained to the shameful slavery of the devil? By losing sanctifying grace, the unhappy one has made himself the target of divine anger; the ire of God clamours against him, and if death should surprise him, what a calamity! His lot will be among the reprobate. That is why the kindest of mothers pours out on Her children, the sinners, all the treasures of the mercy and tenderness of Her maternal Heart. She attracts them with the sweetness of her name. Mother of Perpetual help, with the fame of Her miracles and even with her merciful glance.

How many have not felt moved and converted on exchanging glances with this miraculous Virgin! That glance, filled with sadness and compassion, seems to say to the sinner:

Unfortunate one! How long? How long will you afflict the tender Son you see in My arms with your offences? How long will you offer Him gall and vinegar, rendering His passion and death useless? How long will you afflict me, your Mother, and thrust into my heart, one after the other most cruel swords? How long will you persist in running toward the eternal abyss? My child, how long? Tender words that only the heart hears; wondrous words that illuminate the understanding, soften the hardened heart, melt it, and finally, wrest it that cry of the repentant prodigal: 'I have sinned, My God; forgive me, forgive me.' His tears flow abundantly; the Virgin presents them to Her beloved Son and the sinner is converted.

Say if it is not so, you who have found repentance, life, pardon, peace and joy in your heart before Her Image. Is it surprising, then, that among the wonders the Virgin of Perpetual Help works every day, the stupendous conversions due to Her intercession number in Thousands!

So certain it is that a pious writer said: "I do not know of any more efficacious nor more rapid means to obtain the conversion of a sinner than to inspire in him a tender and sincere devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help". And why would that wonder-working image want to be entrusted to a congregation of missionaries, accompanying them to the most remote towns and going in search of straying sheep in the most unknown and forgotten cottages? Thus, beloved sinner, no matter the number or gravity of your faults or how hardened your heart is, all is not yet lost for you. Lift your spirit! Take courage! Have recourse to Our Mother of Perpetual Help, and you will obtain forgiveness.

She is the most safe refuge of the sinner who sincerely wants to return to his God. Tell Her, then, with all your heart: "O Mother of Perpetual Help! Filled with confidence in Thy kindness and mercy, I throw myself at Thy feet. I come wounded with the arrow of repentance. My having offended God grieves me; Mother obtain for me true repentance and forgiveness." You will see that this benign Mother will make you return to grace and friendship with your God. Amen.

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

"Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!"

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;

Come, therefore, I implore Thee:

Come hasten to assist me.
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Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,
For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes
When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.

Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,
As fond farewell to Thee,
To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EXAMPLE

The following conversion is noteworthy among the many wonders that Our Lady of Perpetual Help performed on the island of St. Maurice (Africa). A young woman was rolling down the slopes of vice; she abandoned her paternal home to give free rein to her passions. Be assured that a human creature cannot have ever fallen into an abyss of corruption as deep as this unfortunate young islander. Her desolate Mother bewailed in silence with bitter tears the perdition of her daughter. She had recourse to the Virgin of Perpetual Help to obtain the conversion of the young woman. She began a novena. And on the second day, Lo and behold, the young girl happened to pass by the Church, entered it, and found herself in front of the image of the Blessed Virgin.

Despite herself, the image attracted the glances of the unhappy sinner. That was sufficient to overcome her; torrents of tears flowed from her eyes, her breast choked in sobs, and the dart of repentance opened the way to the point of wounding this most hardened heart. The loving and afflicted Mother arrived at the Church to continue her novena, and what was her surprise and joy on finding her daughter there! Transported with joy, she flew in search of the missionary priest and returned with great haste in his company to admire that Magdalene

bathed in tears at the feet of Mary of Perpetual Help, to whom the wonder of her conversion was due. This happened in the year 1871.

May Our Lady Of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, love, Mother, refuge, and life. Amen.

EJACULATORY PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! Obtain the pardon of my sins and the grace of weeping for them until death.

EXERCISE

Recite the “Hail Holy Queen” to convert the most hardened sinners.

PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! On seeing myself so contemptible and stained, I should not dare to come to thee and call Thee my Mother. However, I do not want my miseries to deprive me of the consolation and the confidence I feel penetrating me upon uttering Thy sweet name. I do not deserve Thy hearing me; I am a miserable sinner, but the evil is done. Thou canst remedy it. I beg Thee earnestly, my Mother, to come to my aid and to have mercy on me. I know Thou lovest even the most miserable sinners, and Thou goest in search of them to save them. I deserve Hell. It is true: I am the most miserable of sinners, but Thou dost not need to come in search of me. I present myself spontaneously before Thee with the firm hope that Thou will not reject me. Behold me here at Thy feet; my Mother, I will not depart from Thy feet until Thy Son has said to me as to Magdalene. “Thy sins are forgiven thee.”

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give

you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED

(Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O Mary, my queen and mother, o most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

(Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family. Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen

DAY 3

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou will be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

THIRD DAY MEDITATION

Our Lady of Perpetual help assists Her devotees to overcome lukewarmness.

Yesterday, we saw how great is the tenderness of Our Lady with great sinners, but it is no less great with another class of souls in need, those who are called tepid and are in a state almost as dangerous as that of mortal sin.

Although these negligent souls, who at times frequent the sacraments, do indeed wish to avoid mortal sin, nevertheless, they do not try to serve God, filling their lives with voluntary venial sins; with superficiality, they recite their prayers and carry out other devotions; they hear mass, perhaps go to confession and receive Communion, but they do it out of routine and for human considerations; without fruit, without advancing in virtue; anger, lies, murmurings, rash judgements, nasty words, envies, laziness, vanity, impurities, dangerous and useless conversations, disordered attachment to the things of the world and other similar faults easily find their place in the hearts of tepid persons. Think of the great risk of being

condemned for being in this state. St. Teresa saw the place for which she was destined in Hell if she were not more fervent. In the opinion of St. Chrysostom, we must have more fear of habitual venial sins than mortal sins because, says this great saint, mortal sin is monstrous and inspires horror. At the same time, tepidity leaves us calm and unconcerned.

And was it not perchance against tepidity that Our Lord has proffered these tremendous words: "I would that thou wert cold", that is, that you would be in mortal sin! Who would believe it if God Himself had not said it? But because thou art lukewarm, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth".

Who does not have a horror of vomit? That is why St. Gregory writes: "I do not despair of seeing a sinner, as yet unconverted, saved; but rather for the salvation of a soul that has fallen into tepidity." A terrible sentence that the doctors confirm when they teach that it is almost impossible for a tepid soul to be converted. O, careless soul! It is sufficient to commit a habitual sin deliberately to be tepid and to find oneself in this danger. What will become of you who commit so many faults with as much ease as thirsty swallow water? But then, the soul who finds itself in the state will say to me: "Is there then no remedy for me, and must I abandon myself to despair?"

O, unfortunate soul! It is difficult for you to be converted. But with all that, do not despair. Consider that what is impossible on Earth is not so in Heaven. If you wish with all the earnestness of your will to throw off this dismal yoke, I will tell you a way as efficacious as it is easy. Lift your glance; contemplate the image of your most kind Mother of Perpetual Help. Do you not see a brilliant star on Her forehead? It is the symbol of your hope. Place your confidence in Her; begin to serve Her with fidelity, and you will feel your heart transformed. Devotion to this Mother of fair love is incompatible with culpable negligence. O, how many souls have given up their tepidity on the same day they have begun to be Her devotees? What is lacking to you is the powerful love that fears to displease the lovable Jesus, for She is the Mother of this fervent charity that beautifies souls. She wishes to grant it to you more than you want to receive it. Do you want the miracle of Cana re-enacted for you? Invoke Her with love. She will present you to the Divine Infant Who rests in Her arms, saying to Him: "Vinum non habent" (They have no wine). "My son, see this poor soul who does not have true love." And then your coldness will be converted into a fervour, as the water was converted into wine. Our Lady will inspire in you a living desire to concentrate yourself without reserve to the lord; She will give you a special delight in meditating on eternal truths; She will communicate to you a singular devotion to the August Sacrament of our altar, and thus you will be able to break the chains that imprison you and again be the delight of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

"Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!"

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;
Come, therefore, I implore Thee:

Come hasten to assist me.
O Mother sweet and kind!

Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,
For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes
When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.
Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,
As fond farewell to Thee,
To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EJACULATORY PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! Do not let me fall into tepidity, and if by mishap I may have fallen into it, but quickly lift me from it.

EXERCISE

Before ending the novena, make a serious and fervent Confession as if it were your last.

PRAYER

Behold me here, O my Mother. I am one of those unhappy souls who deserve to find myself abandoned by Thy Son, and by Thee, in the miserable state of tepidity, I have lived for so many years. However, the new lights that He imparts to me today through Thy intercession and that mysterious voice that calls me to serve Him fervently are signs that He has not yet abandoned me. O Mother most kind! I have no fervour; I do not love Jesus as I should love Him, and nevertheless, I want to be all His. Please help me to consider venial sin in extreme horror; make me fervent. Pray, do not cease praying for me so that I leave my tepidity and serve God with fervour until attaining Heaven, where I will be safe from all danger of losing

God, sure of loving Him always, and of loving Thee, also, O Mother of Perpetual Help, for all eternity. Amen.

Do you see? Oh, man! Whomever you may be and in whatever occupation you find yourself, you have no reason to be discouraged; find in Our Lady of Perpetual Help a kindest Mother, Who helps you in your miseries if you confide in Her; She will help you continually until seeing you one day seated at Her side in Heaven.

May Thou be blessed, then, Lord, for in Thine infinite mercy Thou hast given us Thy Blessed Mother as a refuge and opportune aid in every tribulation, and blessed is She Who is the Perpetual Help of the exiled children of Eve in this valley of tears. O Mother of Perpetual Help, what consolations and sweetness the soul feels when pronouncing Thy name! For the tongue that utters it, it is an exquisite honey; for the ear that hears it, a harmonious melody; and for the heart that savours it, the purest and holy joy.

EXAMPLE

A figure of tepidity, consumption, that terrible illness that even today mocks human science, afflicted a young North American woman for five years, during two of which she was unable to get up from her bed. Both lungs were affected, and one of them was almost completely lost. Several eminent doctors had declared that there remained no hope of saving her and that no more could be done to alleviate the poor sick girl's suffering. But she, having heard of the extra-ordinary cures due to the invocation of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, felt inspired with great confidence in Her, and she begged her mother to begin a novena in the church of the Redemptorist Fathers, where the miraculous image was venerated. On the ninth day, when the mother was preparing to go and make the last visit to the image, the sick one asked permission to accompany her. The poor mother, believing the girl was delirious, abstained from giving in to her. But behold, at that moment, the young girl arose and dressed without anyone's help. She accompanied her joyous mother to the church and, after having prayed with a fervour that is easy to imagine at the foot of the altar of her Heavenly liberator, she returned to her house perfectly cured. Great was the doctor's surprise when making his usual visit when he found the sick girl up, but that surprise peaked when he found out that she had left the house in the morning. "My daughter is cured; my daughter is cured!" the mother repeated, transported with joy. The doctor, a complete unbeliever, did not know what to think of what he saw. He examined the lungs scrupulously and recognized that they were healthy and intact. When he had been told of all that had happened, he could do no less than exclaim: "Well then, if there are such things on earth that can be called miracles, surely this is one of them."

May Our Lady of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, love, mother, refuge, and life. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are

terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED

(Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O mary, my queen and mother, o most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

(Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family.

Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen

DAY 4

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou will be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

FOURTH DAY MEDITATION

Our Lady of Perpetual Help defends her devotees in temptations.

Consider that one of the major difficulties in which man needs the perpetual help of Mary especially is in temptation, that perpetual and provoking struggle in which we are engaged against the enemies of our salvation. We all, the just and the sinners, feel inclined to evil. After being carried up to the third heaven, St. Paul himself exclaimed: "Unhappy man that I am. I see another Law in my members, fighting against the laws of my mind and captivating me in the law of sin. A sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, was given to buffet me." Perhaps, my friend, you could use the same language; you too, feel this dismal law of sin that wants to dominate the spirit, those vehement impulses of passions hungering for pleasure; Satan and a deceiving world hold out chains to you too, and at times you find yourself in great danger of succumbing to the very violence of temptation. O then, what constraints, what straits are those to the soul who wants to be saved; it finds itself surrounded by so many and such powerful enemies; it feels its weakness and frailty, and with all that, it has to defeat all its enemies together, under pain of being lost, perhaps for eternity! How critical a position! Christians, what will you do in this terrible struggle with the world, the flesh and the devil? Will you surrender your arms, declaring yourself defeated? No, that would be great and criminal cowardice. Ah! Let that not be your conduct! Instead, let us have recourse to Our Lady, and Her Perpetual Help will attain victory for us. It is related that Emperor Constantine, having to face a decisive battle against Maxentius, an enemy of the Christians, lifted his eyes to heaven and saw in the sky a brilliant cross with this inscription: "In this sign shalt thou conquer." And the complete routing of Maxentius verified it. Christian soul, you are continually at war with so many enemies; heaven presents you with the same banner in the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Look at the veil that covers the virginal forehead of the Heavenly Queen; on it, you will also see a cross that promises you the most powerful help of the merciful Mother of God.

Mary is terrible against the power of Hell, Like an army in battle array. She is the tower of David, constructed with ramparts from which hang a thousand shields. Against this tower, the sharp arrows of the enemy will break. She is the one Who crushes the head of the infernal serpent, and the powers of hell flee, simply on hearing Her most holy Name pronounced. Christian, have you looked for some time with reflection upon the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help? Does not Her sight remind you of the prodigies worked in other times by the ark of the Lord? Truly, the ark of the Covenant was covered with pure gold; it contained the manna that fell from heaven, and two angels covered it with their white wings. By means of the ark of the Lord, the people of God attained their victories; the walls of Jericho crumbled; the Philistines were defeated; because the holy ark was with Israel. Well then, do you not see the gold of divine charity glow in the same way in the loving Heart of that kindest of mothers? Do you not see Jesus, the sweet manna of our souls, in Her maternal arms? Do you not see the angels in the background of that picture with their wings extended? Is it not by means of Her most powerful help that so many Christians have attained victory over their enemies? How many souls adorned with the grace of the Lord would have been sunk in sin if they had not invoked Our Lady of Perpetual Help at the moment of temptation!

Thus, O Christian soul, make a firm resolution never to enter into combat with the enemies of your salvation alone, but rather accompanied by Most Holy Mary; Her Perpetual Help will serve as your shield, and thus you will attain innumerable other victories in as many battles as you must endure. O Mother of Perpetual Help! Thou art the holy Ark of the Lord; with Thee,

we will win victories; before Thee, the enemies of our salvation will flee terrified; in every temptation, we will invoke Thy Perpetual Help, and Thou wilt help us perpetually.

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

“Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!”

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;
Come, therefore, I implore Thee:
Come hasten to assist me.
O Mother sweet and kind!

Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,
For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes
When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.

Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,
As fond farewell to Thee,
To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EJACULATORY PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! Do not let me fall into temptation; deliver us from all evil.
Amen.

EXERCISE

Accustom yourself not to argue with temptation and to cry immediately to Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

PRAYER

O my Mother of Perpetual Help! I bless and thank my God for having inspired me with such confidence in Thee because I know this confidence is a pledge of salvation for me. Oh! How unfortunate for me! If I have fallen into sin in the past, it is for not having had recourse to Thee. I hope I have been pardoned through the merits of Jesus and Thy powerful intercession. But I can again lose the grace of God; the danger has not ceased; the enemy does not sleep. O, how many new temptations remain for me to overcome? O most sweet sovereign! Protect me, receive me under Thy mantle, do not let me fall. Grant me Thy Perpetual Help, and obtain the grace that, in all the assaults of Hell, I will not forget to invoke Thee, repeating without ceasing: "Mother of Perpetual Help, do not let me lose my God." Amen.

EXAMPLE

In Rome, two brothers, sons of good parents, on a certain day had a dispute in which they became inflamed to such a degree that one of them took a stiletto (a type of short three-edged sword) to wound the other. A sister of the unfortunate youths who witnessed the scene gave a cry of fear and exclaimed in a tone of unspeakable sorrow: "My Mother of Perpetual Help, have mercy on us!" Scarcely had the young men heard this invocation, and in spite of the fury that carried him away, he threw down the fratricidal weapon and, with the meekness of a lamb, embraced his brother, saying to him calmly: "Let us make peace! I beg you!" The pious sister picked up the stiletto and took it to the altar of Our Lady as a trophy of the victory that the powerful Queen had just won over one of the most terrible passions of the human heart.

May Our Lady Of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, love, mother, refuge, and life. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED (Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O mary, my queen and mother, o most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP (Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family. Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen

DAY 5

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou will be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

FIFTH DAY MEDITATION

Our Lady of Perpetual Help protects Her devotees in all the necessities and afflictions of life.

Let us consider that the world is a place of trial, a valley of tears and weeping. “Who is unaware of it?” says Job, “Man,” says Job, “born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many works and miseries.” His work is that of Calvary. Such is the condition of every mortal. That is why the author of the “Imitation of Christ” says: Man needs consolation. And this consolation, where will our afflicted heart find it? Perhaps in our friends and neighbours? Ah, no! Usually, they look with indifference upon our tribulations; our tears do not move them, and if one of them is moved to compassion upon seeing our sorrow, often he does not know how to mitigate it in the least because he is impotent. Of whom can we ask for help in poverty, consolation in afflictions, counsel in doubts? Of whom but Her Who is the Perpetual Help of mortals.

Look, afflicted soul, see how the divine Infant clasps the hand of His tender Mother. He has seen the cross and the instrument of His passion that the angels present to Him, and He has become terrified, and His Heart has said: "My sorrow is always before My eyes." But where does He seek consolation? In His good Mother Who extends Her hand to Him to support and comfort Him in His suffering! Let us learn from the Heavenly Infant to have recourse to the compassionate Mother of Perpetual Help in our afflictions and trials. Perpetual also are our miseries, but, oh, consolation! Perpetual also is her Help.

Poor soul! Do not be discouraged. Your Mother sees the many and varied calamities that grieve you. She sees what torments your body and afflicts your soul.

Are you poor? Neither the necessities of your family, nor the afflictions of your heart, nor the tears you shed for lack of means with which to procure food or to satisfy your creditor or to provide honestly for your children pass unnoticed by Her.

Are you ill? She sees the pain that consumes you, the abhorrence that afflicts you, the fear that oppresses you, the days you pass without relief, the nights you count without rest. Are you the target of another's envy or anger? Are you calumniated? Do you find a reason for affliction within your own family? This compassionate Mother witnesses your bitterness, the injustices committed against you in tribunals, the harm your rivals cause you, and the outrage and offence you receive from your relatives. She counts your every tear. This, with all the rest that afflicts you, She sees without withdrawing Her penetrating and benign glance from you for one moment.

And She not only sees it, but it seems she feels it more vividly than you. A mother is of mercy, and that is why, just as She sees our miseries with the eyes of a mother with the heart of a mother, She sympathizes with them. In such a way that, just as at the foot of the cross, the wounds of the most sacred Body of Jesus were reflected in the loving Heart of Mary. Thus all the injuries of our wounded heart are reproduced in that of our Heavenly Mother. Finally, this tender Mother not only sees our miseries and our hearts open but is moved by our misfortune in a gesture of helping us with all haste.

And She exercises this pious office with us continually. Is She doing anything but granting us help with our necessities? Ah! No matter how little we dedicate our thoughts to the many laborious evils we are subject to in life, we will see that in everything, She defends, relieves, and protects us. At the wedding at Cana, scarcely was She aware of the lack of wine, of the shame of the bridegroom and the disturbance of the guests; when moved to compassion, She presented that necessity to Her son, begging sweetly to apply the opportune remedy; thus, in the same way, now that She is seated gloriously at the right hand of Her Son in Heaven, She continually discloses to Him all our necessities. She begs Him to alleviate our miseries or provide powerful help to suffering them with humble resignation, as this or that may rebound to His greater glory and our spiritual good.

Well then: if such is the soothing effects that we experience every day from the loving help of Mary, what must be our gratitude towards a Mother so kind, what must be our affection for a Mother so tender, what must be our confidence in a Mother Who loves us so and concerns Herself so much with us? She has Her eyes always fixed on our miseries, Her Heart always disposed to be compassionate, and Her hands always open to remedy them. Let us have continuous and devout recourse then, to this most kind Mother, disclosing all our needs to

Her with filial confidence. Let us be assured that through Her, we will have our perpetual relief, encouragement, and consolation. Amen.

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

“Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!”

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;
Come, therefore, I implore Thee:
Come hasten to assist me.
O Mother sweet and kind!

Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,
For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes
When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.

Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,
As fond farewell to Thee,
To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EJACULATORY PRAYER

In all my difficulties and miseries, come to my aid, O Mother most kind!

EXERCISE

When some labour is presented, say, O Mother of Perpetual Help! Take this chalice from me or give me virtue and fortitude to bear it for the love of my God.

PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! Similarly, as a poor, ragged and wounded one presents himself to a great Queen, I present myself to Thee, Who art the Queen of Heaven and Earth. From the exalted throne where Thou art seated, I beg Thee, do not disdain to turn Thy merciful eyes toward this unhappy sinner. For that is why God has enriched Thee so much, to help the poor, and He has established Thee, Queen of Mercy, so Thou mayest alleviate the miserable. Behold me, then, and have mercy on me. I am not unaware that Thy merciful Heart finds consolation in aiding the miserable. Today, then, console Thy pious Heart and console me, too, since Thou hast occasion to assist me. See, O tender Mother, the affliction of my heart; see my family's needs. There are so many causes for affliction in my own home and so much persecution on the part of my neighbours; illness torments my body, and interior pains devour my soul. To whom must I have recourse, O my Lady and Mother, but to Thee, Who art Mother of Perpetual Help? Allow me, then, to say with St. Bernard: "Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to Thy protection, implored Thy help, or sought Thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto Thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother! To Thee, I come before Thee; I kneel, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in Thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

EXAMPLE

At the end of the year 1883, while the free-thinkers of the United States were celebrating their annual reunion in Rochester, and in their impious discourse were denying the existence of God and of His works, behold a marvellous event suddenly occurred that occupied the American press; it is the following:

In the city of Boston, the director of a college had horrible cancer in her breast that had broken out in three places. The most distinguished doctors of Boston had examined the disease and judged it incurable unless there was a happy outcome to a surgical operation. The sick woman, although repugnant, had to consent to it; first, she began a novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Eight days had passed without the desired result, and the operation would be performed the following day. Several distinguished university professors, including its head, were to cooperate in this painful undertaking. They put the sick woman to sleep with a soporific drink and placed her on the operating table. The head surgeon was somewhat distant, and the surgeon assigned to begin that risky task asked him with which of the three wounds he was to start. "With the largest," he was answered. But behold the surgeon could not find any cancer. Very courageously, the head surgeon approached the sick woman and imagined his surprise when neither could he find any sign of the terrible disease; nevertheless, he affirmed solemnly to the doctors who were present that the previous evening and that very same morning he had seen three horrible cancers in the breast of the sick woman. He added that their appearance was a mystery to him. They released the sick woman and awakened her. Not feeling any pain, she asked why they released her. They assured her that the operation was not necessary. Having convinced herself of that fact, she began to thank Our Lady of Perpetual Help, declaring to the incredulous but

stunned doctors that this was the work of the good Mother, in Whose honour a novena was coming to an end on that very same day.

May Our Lady Of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, love, mother, refuge, and life. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED

(Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O mary, my queen and mother, o most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from

Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

(Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family. Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen

DAY 6

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou wilt be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

SIXTH DAY MEDITATION

Our Lady of Perpetual Help sustains Her devotees in the practice of virtues.

If it were sufficient to avoid sin to be agreeable in everything to the Lord, the benign office of our Mother would stop at this; for this alone, She would provide Her Perpetual Help. But God is not content without being offended; He requires positive service; He wants us to be perfect: “Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect,” and truly, He wants us to dedicate ourselves to the practice of these Christian virtues. But how many difficulties are encountered on the path that leads to the holy mountain of perfection? It seems that good, solely because it is good, is now contrary to our corrupt nature. Just souls who have consecrated themselves to the practice of piety, have you not found it so? O! How arid and sterile is our heart, incapable of producing any fruit worthy of life eternal if the Heavenly waters of grace do not fall to fertilize it! When a soul truly wishes to sanctify itself, it renounces itself, advancing each day in perfection, experiencing what the author of the “Imitation of Christ” says: “that sanctification is not a child’s play, nor the work of one day”; then it feels the need of perpetual and powerful help, of continual assistance. Do we not have Our Lady of Perpetual Help to protect us? Take courage, generous souls, do we have it? Why would She withdraw? Why turn back in the face of difficulty? Do you not see that She presents in the face of difficulty the Infant Jesus? And why, except to incite us to the practice of virtue? The knowledge that the King is watching him gives courage to the warrior in combat. Thus, when good is made difficult for us, when we are about to weaken, let us fix our glance on the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The sight of the adorable Infant Whom one day we must reward us, and we will have the courage to practise the most heroic virtues.

Children of Mary, would you like to be truly virtuous but always find in your interior reserve a trace of self-love that poisons your good works? Invoke Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and in a little while, your spirit, like Hers, will seek nothing but God’s good pleasure and glory. Are you the target of continuous contradictions? Do you lack patience? Invoke Our Lady of Perpetual Help frequently, and you will be meek and humble of heart. Do you take delight in the vanities of this world? Invoke Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and you will grasp the vanity of everything created. The white lily of chastity has enamoured you — do you want to preserve it immaculately or acquire it again if, through misfortune, you lost it? Invoke Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and soon you will be singing within yourself to Him, Who grazes among the lilies: “As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters.” As the lilies among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters.

Who bears on her forehead the star of faith and the cross that is all our hope, the love of the Divine Jesus? Who will grant you that favour but the Virgin? The wound of an insult received does not want to heal in your heart? Invoke Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and you will succeed in doing good to those who have offended you. Finally, are you in the flower of your age? Does the love of the way of life concern you? Pray to Her for all other souls whom She has helped, enlightening them about the sacred vanities of the world and the love of God, to the point of abandoning everything and consecrating themselves to the Lord through the sacred vows of religion. And finally, if you have chosen your vocation and wish to work out your sanctification in the world, make yourself a devotee of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and you will attain it.

O with what speed those who consecrate themselves to the veneration of Our Lady advance on the part of perfection! That precious devotion seems to give them wings to fly to the heights of sanctity; let the priests who have inculcated Our Lady in their penitents speak about it. Only in Heaven will it be known how many souls have reached perfection through that so easy means. Dedicate yourselves, then, pious souls, from now on, to the service of that gracious Mother, and one day you will be Her crown in glory.

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

“Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!”

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;
Come, therefore, I implore Thee:
Come hasten to assist me.
O Mother sweet and kind!

Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,

For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes
When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.

Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,

As fond farewell to Thee,
To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EJACULATORY PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help, I want to be a faithful imitator of Thy virtues; help me in such a noble undertaking.

EXERCISE

Recite the Holy Rosary in honour of Our Lady of Perpetual Help to obtain the gift of never weakening in the practice of virtue.

PRAYER

O my Mother of Perpetual Help! How is it possible that I must be so wicked with Thee being so holy? Today I do not come to ask for temporal goods of Thee, but things more pleasing to Thy Heart! Thou art most humble; attain for me, then, humility and love of contempt. Thou, Who wast most patient in the afflictions of life, obtain for me patience in adversities. Thou, Who lived always withdrawn from everything created, obtain for me detachment from all creatures. Thou, who wast always pure and spotless, attain for me a perfect purity of heart. Thou, Who wast filled with love for God, attain for me the gift of holy and pure love. Thou, Who wast always full of charity for Thy neighbour, grant that I may have a holy and efficacious love for my brothers. Thou, Who wast always united to the will of God, obtain for me the same grace for me, above all in my choice of a state of life and complete conformity with the Divine Providence. In a word, O Most holy of creatures, make me a saint! These are the graces I beg of Thee. Do not let me weaken in the practice of virtue, O Mary my Mother, my love, my life, my refuge, my consolation, my Perpetual Help. Amen.

EXAMPLE

Interior afflictions were tormenting a woman of Finales to the extent that she suffered grave harm to her peace and health. Having heard, in 1873, of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and of the numerous graces She lavished, she took several small images. With her father's consent, she made a vow to go to Rome for a visit to the sanctuary of Our Lady if she recovered tranquillity in her soul. The Blessed Virgin heard her. Hardly had she formulated her vow when she felt free of her interior sufferings, and, together with peace, her strength returned, sleep, appetite, and in a word, the health of soul and body.

May Our Lady Of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, love, mother, refuge, and life. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED

(Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O mary, my queen and mother, o most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

(Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family. Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen

DAY 7

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou will be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

SEVENTH DAY MEDITATION

Our Lady of Perpetual Help grants Her devotees fidelity in Her service.

Perseverance! A great uncertain problem, a major question of life and death, a perpetual torment of souls who want to be saved. Have you not said, trembling — on seeing yourself surrounded by so many dangers, and above all, on seeing souls who seemed confirmed in good fall away, on feeling violent passions inflamed, and on examining your fickleness — have you not said: “O, will I be saved? Have my sins been forgiven? I hope so. Am I in the grace of God? Will I persevere in good until the end? What will be my sentence at the judgment? Will I be found among the predestined?” And, finally, what will be my lot in eternity? Terrifying reflections, questions whose uncertain replies fill the heart with anxiety. St. Teresa, writing on this point, could not understand why her lot did not fall away from her hand. After having preached to others, St. Paul feared that he would be among the reprobate, and St. Jerome responded beforehand to the pen the sound of the trumpet of final judgment with cries of terror.

How, then, to get rid of this annoying doubt? How to find a guarantee of tranquility? A great saint tells us: “Of what value is it to stir up these questions disputed by the wise ones concerning whether you will be saved or lost?” If we are true children of Mary, certainly: “We will be among the chosen ones.” This is the doctrine of all the Doctors of the Church. It is impossible for one who counts on the most powerful help of Mary to be condemned. Consoling words that should fill us with confidence and devotion. But this is understood on the condition that one lives without sins or desires at least to cease sinning; if someone wants to sin with the hope that the Blessed Virgin will save him through his own faults, unworthy, incapable at least to cease sinning; if someone wants to sin with the hope that the Virgin will make him persevere, it is true, then, O Mother of Perpetual Help, that if I am Thy faithful servant, without a doubt, I will be saved. I will serve Thee, then, I will love Thee; I will invoke Thee always.

Nevertheless, Christian soul, you are still not at peace concerning your perseverance; you must still fear one thing. Without doubt, Most Holy Mary will save you if you invoke Her, but will you be faithful in Her service? Will you, one day, cease to be Her devotee? So great is the fickleness in our heart that tomorrow we will give up what we have begun. Have, perchance, all those who were devotees of the Virgin, persevered in Her service? There is a remedy for this great misery, called inconstancy, in Our Lady of Perpetual Help. She is the one Who must help us to persevere in her service. If all graces pass through the hands of Mary, why would not this most special grace of all graces, that of invoking her perpetually, also pass through them? And the very name of Perpetual Help, is it not almost a sure guarantee that she will help us perpetually? How could we weaken in her love and forget Her? If a mother, according to nature, knows that there cannot be happiness for us, her very beloved children, without having fidelity in Her service, which is intimately united to the service of the Lord.

And that is why She provides Her devotees with this paternal help, abundantly and perpetually. When a soul who has been away for a time wishes to return to Her, with His paternal help, abundantly and perpetually, She waits at the door of his heart and knocks until it is opened, until the unfaithful one returns to his primitive fervour. We have an infallible means of assuring ourselves of perseverance in the devotion to Mary; it suffices to ask Her for the grace to call on Her always, to ask Her for the grace today, to ask Her tomorrow and every day. In short, O soul devoted to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, engrave in your memory

the maxim of the great doctor, St. Alphonsus: "I am sure that I will be saved if I sincerely invoke Mary; I am sure of invoking Her if I ask Her grace to do so always, and I will not tire of repeating this petition of imploring Her."

Let us conclude, then, by saying with St. Bernard: "O man, whomever you may be, do not forget that, rather than walking on earth, you go fluctuating between dangers and tempests; if you do not want to be immersed, do not take your eyes away from this star: Mary. Look at Her often. When in danger of sinning, in the anguish of temptations, in doubts concerning things that may resolve, remember that Mary can assist you, and call on Her right away, so She may help you. Never let her powerful name leave your heart so that it may inspire you with confidence, nor your lips assist you, that you may invoke Her. Follow Mary, and you may not stray from the path of salvation; commend yourself to Her, and you will not lose confidence; if Her hand sustains you, you will not fall; if She is your guide, you will be saved without effort; and finally, if Mary takes your defence, undoubtedly you will arrive at the Kingdom of the blessed. Do this, and you will live." Amen.

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

"Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!"

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;
Come, therefore, I implore Thee:
Come hasten to assist me.
O Mother sweet and kind!

Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,
For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes

When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.

Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,
As fond farewell to Thee,

To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EJACULATORY PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! Grant me Thine omnipotent aid and grant that I may ask for it without ceasing.

EXERCISE

Do not let one day pass without reciting three Hail Marys, morning and night, to Our Lady of Perpetual Help to obtain the grace of invoking Her the following day.

PRAYER

O my Mother of Perpetual Help! In Thy hands I place my poor soul; I entrust to Thee my perseverance; intercede for me, an unhappy sinner. Take me under Thy protection, and this will suffice for me. Indeed, if Thou protectest me, I have nothing to fear. I do not fear my sins because Thou wilt remedy the evil they have caused. I do not fear the devils because Thou art more powerful than all Hell. I do not even fear my Judge Himself because Thou wilt appease His just indignation by one word from Thee. No, I do not fear anything! O! Despite all this, my Mother, one fear assaults me. And it is that of forgetting Thee, ceasing one day to call Thee to my aid, and thus to be lost for all eternity! O, my tender Mother! Obtain for me the grace of commending myself to Thee always, and if now Thou foreseest that one day I will abandon Thee, let me die today at Thy feet, before the world may be a witness to such great ingratitude. But no, O Mother, I will not forget Thee; I would rather die, that my right hand wither, that my tongue be paralyzed than not one day go to sing Thy mercies forever and ever. Amen.

EXAMPLE

In a certain city in England, a man, completely given to drinking, used to come home every day intoxicated. One day his unhappy wife, tired of all she was suffering from her husband's perversity, lamented her lot before a devotee of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The latter moved to compassion and gave a medal of that Virgin to the afflicted wife, advising her to light a candle in honour of Her dear Mother every day.

The woman promised to do so and recited the holy rosary before the miraculous medal. Her husband returned that day late, as was his custom, but not intoxicated.

After some time had passed, the woman related to her pious advisor, who was asking her about her husband: "Since I began to honour Our Lady of Perpetual Help, he has amended; he returned to his vice only once when, distractedly, I forgot to fulfil the promise I made to the Mother of God. Thus, the blessed Virgin, Who foresaw that one day I will abandon Thee, let me die today at Thy feet, rewards Her devotees."

May Our Lady Of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, love, Mother, refuge, and life. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED

(Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O mary, my queen and mother, o most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

(Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family. Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen

DAY 8

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou will be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by

means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

EIGHTH DAY MEDITATION

Our Lady of Perpetual Help assists Her devotees at the hour of death.

Consider that, although man needs the benign help of Mary at all times and in all circumstances, never, however, as much as in the anxieties of death, which are the greatest that can be experienced in this world.

Terrible, indeed, very awful, are the afflictions of the dying. Everything conspires to make those last moments terrible: the memory of sins committed, the fear of the incomprehensible judgements of an offended God, the uncertainty of eternal salvation, everything. Especially then, Hell arms itself and puts into action all its forces to possess the soul that is going to pass into eternity because it knows that only a little time remains before it is to be judged and that, if it does not succeed in ruining it, it will be saved forever. That is why the wicked spirit, accustomed to tempting it in life, is not content solely with tempting it at the moment of death but even calls his companions to help him. They say that at the moment of St. Andrew Avellino's death, ten thousand devils gathered in his cell to tempt him.

But if, at that time, we have on our side the most powerful help of Mary, who will be able to overcome us? And how will that gracious Mother deny us Her aid if we persevere in asking for it? She revealed to St. Gertrude that She grants aid to Her devotees, at the point of death, as many times as they have implored Her in life.

O, my friend! How fortunate you will be if you find yourself bound by the chains of love to Our Lady of Perpetual Help at the critical moment of death. These are the chains of salvation and eternal glory. No, that tender Mother does not know how to abandon Her true devotees at that supreme moment. She is the Mother of Perpetual Help, and just as She has helped them in their exile, so also She exhibits Her sweetness at the hour of death and obtains a sweet and happy end for them.

And above all, showing Herself worthy of the beautiful name She bears, She sends the prince St. Michael with all the angels to the aid of Her faithful dying children, so they go then to defend them from the snares of the devils and receive the souls of all those who have continually commended themselves to Her.

She is not content with sending angels to the aid of Her devotees; She will come in person to assist them in their last moments.

Since that great day when She had good fortune and at the same time the sorrow of assisting Her son Jesus, Who is the first of the predestined, She obtained the grace of assisting all of them also at the terrible moment of death. That is why the Holy Church makes us pray for Her to help us, especially in the hour of our death: "Pray for us, sinners, now and at the hour of our death."

And this is found to conform with what the Blessed Virgin said to St. Bridget, speaking of Her devotees: "Then, My daughter, as their Mistress and Mother, when they die, I will go out to meet them so they may have consolation and comfort."

The loving Queen then covers these souls with Her mantle and presents them to the judge, and thus indeed attains salvation for them.

Christian, although you may have been a sinner, you will not cease experiencing this consolation, provided that, from now on, you manage to live well and to serve this gracious and most amiable Lady. In your anguish and the temptations with which the devil will assault you at death to make you despair, Our Mother of Perpetual Help will give you fortitude and come Herself to defend you. And, with such a Mother and Protector, what will you fear, O sinner?

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

“Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!”

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;
Come, therefore, I implore Thee:

Come hasten to assist me.
O Mother sweet and kind!

Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,
For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes
When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.

Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,
As fond farewell to Thee,
To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EJACULATORY PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! Pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

EXERCISE

Commend yourself three times daily to Our Lady of Perpetual Help to attain a happy death.

PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! What will become of me when I am at the point of delivering my soul to God? From now on, when I consider my sins, when I think of that terrible moment that must decide my salvation or my eternal perdition, I begin to tremble and become perplexed. O Mother of Perpetual Help! Do not abandon me in that tremendous hour. What will become of me if Thou dost abandon me in that supreme moment! O Holy Virgin, my Hope, come to my aid in the tremendous anguish in which I will be held prisoner. Fortify me when the devil wants to fling me into despair by the memory of the sins I have committed. Obtain for me the grace to invoke Thee then more often than ever, so that I may die uttering Thy most sweet name, together with that of Thy adorable Son, and that I may die in the love of God and Thee, to go afterwards to love Thee eternally in Paradise. Amen.

EXAMPLE

A woman from the Pontifical States went one day to Rome to venerate the miraculous image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. A priest, to whom she addressed herself, asked her the motive that had decided her to undertake such a long trip. She answered him: "My husband told me several times that a very miraculous image of the Virgin, called Our Lady of Perpetual Help, was venerated in this church. He often commended himself to Her and received many graces through Her intercession. A little while ago, he died. He told me to say that he saw Our Lady at his bedside when he approached death. He received such consolation from this apparition that he seemed not to feel the pains of death, and he died so gently and piously that I do not doubt his salvation, and my greatest happiness would be to die as he did."

May Our Lady Of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, love, mother, refuge, and life. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the

path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED

(Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O mary, my queen and mother, o most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

(Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family. Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all

those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen

DAY 9

ACT OF CONTRITION

My Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my father and Redeemer, behold at Thy feet a poor sinner who has so grievously afflicted Thy loving Heart. O lovable Jesus, how could I have offended thee and filled with bitterness that Heart that loves me so and that has spared no effort to attain my love? How great has been my ingratitude! But, O my saviour, be consoled, be consoled, I say to thee; now I find myself repentant, such grief I feel for the afflictions I have caused thee, that I would like to die of poor sorrow and contrition. O my Jesus! Who could have made me weep for sin as Thou hast wept for them in Thy mortal life! My soul is oppressed for having offended Thee. Eternal Father, in satisfaction for my offences, I offer Thee the affliction and sorrow the Heart of Thy Divine Son has felt for them. And Thou, O Loving Jesus! Give me such a horror for sin that it may make me avoid even the most trifling of faults from now on. Depart from my Heart, earthly affections; I do not want to love anything now but my most bountiful Redeemer. O my Jesus, help me, strengthen me, and pardon me.

My Mother of Perpetual Help, intercede for me and obtain for me the pardon of my sins.

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(To be said everyday)

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary! Whom to inspire us with boundless confidence has been pleased to take the sweet name of Mother of Perpetual Help; I implore Thee to come to my aid always and everywhere, in my temptations, after my falls, in my difficulties, in all the miseries of life, and above all, at the hour of my death. Give me, O loving Mother, the desire, nay more, the habit always to have recourse to Thee, for I feel assured that if I am faithful in invoking Thee, Thou will be faithful in coming to my assistance. Obtain for me, then, this grace of graces, the grace to pray to Thee without ceasing and with childlike trust, that, by means of my constant plea, I may ensure Thy Perpetual Help and final perseverance. Bless me, O tender and solicitous Mother, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen

NINTH DAY MEDITATION

Our Lady of Perpetual Help assists Her devotees in Purgatory.

Will the exercise of Mary's mercy be limited, by chance, to the threshold of eternity or before the tribunal of Jesus Christ? Oh no! Remember that Her help is perpetual. With maternal solicitude, She continues working on our behalf until She sees us at Her side in glory. This compassionate Mother helps Her devotees in all the necessities of life and at death. Since the imprisoned souls need greater help because they are more tormented and cannot relieve

themselves by their efforts, this Queen of mercy busies Herself with greater efficacy than with their efforts.

Above all, hearing Her most holy name alleviates those unhappy prisoners. They are consoled thinking that the help of their Mother is perpetual and that it extends, therefore, even to that horrifying prison. One day, Jesus told Her, as St. Bridget heard it: “Thou art My Mother, the Mother of mercy, the consolations of those who find themselves in Purgatory.” And the Blessed Virgin said to the aforementioned saint that just as the words of consolation she addresses to a poor, sick, afflicted and abandoned one, on his bed of sorrow, delights him, so also were those souls consoled with just hearing Her name. This is a great relief in that prison, for which they invoke it often. And the loving Mother, on hearing them invoke, provides them with Her maternal help, directs Her pleas to God in which many souls are helped and refreshed, as with heavenly dew in their great sufferings.

Moreover, as sovereign Queen, She exercises in that prison Her dominion and the fullness of Her powers, not only to relieve but also to free from their pains those holy prisoners. And regarding relieving them, St. Bernardine of Siena, applying to the matter we are dealing with, those words of Ecclesiasticus: “I have walked in the waves of the seas.” “This is,” visiting and helping in the necessities and pains of My devotees, who are My children. The pains of Purgatory, I have called “waves,” adds the aforementioned saint, “that never pass, and they may be called waves of the sea because they are very bitter pains.”

Afflicted by those pains, the devotees of Mary are often visited and aided by Her. Mary Herself revealed to St. Bridget that She was the Mother of all the souls that are found in Purgatory. The compassionate Mother does not disdain to descend at times to that holy prison to visit and console Her afflicted children, mitigated, hour by hour, by Her pleas. How important it is, then, to dedicate oneself to the veneration of that kindest Queen, since Her devotees are not forgotten in the purifying flames of Purgatory!

But Mary not only consoles, aids and visits Her children in that prison of expiation, but also, at times, She takes them away from there to carry them to Christ in Heaven. On the day of Her glorious assumption, one pious tradition holds, Purgatory was left vacant because Mary had asked and obtained from Jesus Christ the privilege of taking with Her to glory all the souls grieving in that place with purifying fires left stagnant. And it is a matter of faith that with Her plea and petitions, She has the singular privilege of freeing, as it pleases Her, the souls in Purgatory, especially those of Her most devoted children. Be a sincere devotee of this tender Mother so you, too, may feel the sweet effects of Her maternal help when you are in Purgatory. Even more: ask Her to grant you, before death, the grace of making an act of such perfect love that you may fly to Heaven without even passing through those purifying flames. How important it is, then, to dedicate oneself to the veneration of that kindest Queen!

Meditate and ask for what you wish to obtain from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JOYS

AT THE END OF EACH PARAGRAPH SAY

“Come hasten to assist me, O Mother sweet and kind!”

Thou art Perpetual Help benign;

Come, therefore, I implore Thee:

Come hasten to assist me.
O Mother sweet and kind!

Hear, O Virgin pure,
Our fervent prayers of love
That fly to Thee above
On Thine exalted Throne.

Stained by guilt and sin
I bow my head and cry;
And at Thy feet I sigh
For clemency and love.

Free the careless soul
From its tepid ways,
And set the soul ablaze
With fervour in devotion

Wretched in this vale
Of pain and tribulation,
For heavenly consolation
I humbly beg of Thee.

If my virtue wanes
When tempests howl and roar,
My energies restore
Beloved Morning Star.

To Thy faithful child
Encouragement provide,
And toward virtue guide
His weak unsteady step.

Free my fickle heart
From all its lassitude,
And grant it fortitude
To lead a sinless life.

In the final clash
With death in all its fright,
How great my soul's delight
If then I can exclaim:

In purgatory's fire,
Dear Mother, please be sweet;
Great Lady, I entreat,
Alleviate my pains.

Grant me, Mother dear,
As fond farewell to Thee,
To sing eternally
With love and praise to Thee:

Come hasten to assist me
O Mother sweet and kind!

EJACULATORY PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! Have mercy on the souls in Purgatory, and especially on those who were most devoted to Thee. Amen.

EXERCISE

Hear Mass and receive Holy Communion in honour of Our Lady of Perpetual Help for the souls in Purgatory.

PRAYER

O Mother of Perpetual Help! O Thou who dost never abandon Thy children and help them perpetually in life, in death, and even in Purgatory itself, behold here at Thy feet a poor sinner filled with confidence who has recourse to Thee and gives himself/herself to Thee. Many and great sins have I committed; I hope, O my Mother, that they have been forgiven, but I do not know if I have done sufficient penance for them, and I may likely have to continue expiating them in Purgatory.

Ah! If such would be my lot, do not cease visiting me in that terrible prison; console me then and alleviate my pains. Finally, be my perpetual help until Thou seest me in Heaven, praising Thee and singing of Thy mercies for all eternity. Amen.

EXAMPLE

Austria, 1876 — A God-fearing woman had a son of evil character and bad habits. He was apt to reply to maternal advice: “I know what I must do.”

One day, the Mother, filled with confidence, made a pilgrimage to Catselsdorf, some four leagues distant, by a laborious road, to a sanctuary of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

As soon as she arrived at the altar of the Virgin, she knelt and prayed for a long time, begging with abundant tears for the conversion of her son. Meanwhile, her son, who remained at home, began to feel a sudden change of heart, together with great confidence in Her who is the refuge of sinners.

The good Mother returned to her home, related what she had seen and heard, and spoke of her emotion in the presence of the divine image. The prodigal son, hearing this, could not resist grace and resolved to make the same pilgrimage as soon as possible. He did it alone, without his mother’s knowledge.

Our Lady finished what she had begun, granting to that unfortunate one the grace of sincere contrition and a good confession as a reward for that act of virtue. He received Holy Communion and returned home.

But it was his misfortune that he had not been deaf to the voice of God, for a little later he was the victim of a sad accident and died suddenly.

His poor Mother was ignorant of his conversion. How great, then, was her bitter and inconsolable sorrow, believing her son had died in his sins without repentance. She could do nothing but weep day and night.

But She who had saved the sinner did not leave the pious Mother without consolation. One night she saw her son in her dreams. He was in Purgatory, and from the midst of the flames, he extended his arms, crying:

“My mother, my Mother! I am not condemned! Go, I beg you, on a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Catselsdorf, but I suffer horribly in this place!”

As soon as she awoke, the poor woman, without concerning herself with her duties, went to the church mentioned.

Prostrate at the feet of the Virgin, after having received Holy Communion, she prayed fervently for her dead son. Then she learned from his confessor what she had been ignorant of: that a few days before, her son had indeed come to pray before the protective image, had made a good confession, and had returned to his house reconciled with God and prepared for death.

On hearing such happy news, her grief was transformed into pure joy. Praising and blessing the merciful Mother, she went everywhere relating the wonders worked by Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

May Our Lady of Perpetual Help be loved, praised, invoked, and eternally blessed! May she be my hope, my love, my Mother, my refuge, and my life. Amen.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Mother of perpetual help, I freely and consciously dedicate my body, soul and spirit to Your Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus today. May two hearts of love protect my life and soul from the attacks of the devil and the fire of hell.

My Queen and Mother, before Your throne of mercy, I come for help and intercession. I beg for mercy and healing touch upon me and those that are sick, especially those that are terminally ill. Mother of mercy, present all those sick before your Son; our lord Jesus Christ, the greatest physician; for miraculous cure and wholeness. Uproot every infirmity in our lives and grant us divine healing.

Mother of perpetual help, intercede for me now and always, be my constant and sure aid in times of need, trouble or affliction. Help me always to serve, love and obey your Son, my lord Jesus Christ. Lead me by the hand in this life that I live, that I may not stray from the path of life, but live according to the will of God, in order to have a blessed life here on Earth and to rejoice also in the afterlife.

I commit to You today, my life. I pray that You sustain and increase all sources of my joy and happiness and remove every form of discomfort and pain not of God in my life. Give me the grace to serve and please God that He may bless, favour and guard me in all I do.

I pray for the grace always to be your devotee and always call on you daily. I consecrate my family to you, asking you to always intercede on our behalf at every moment and at all times, and I also ask you to preserve our soul and lead us to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I give you my whole life and my entire being, asking you to take strict possession of me from now henceforth as your property. I also consecrate today all family members, wherever they are, asking you to take over their lives.

Mother of perpetual help, I give you my heart and my soul. Preserve them in love and for the love of Your Son, my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make my heart fear God and desist from displeasing and hurting God as long as I live. Give me the grace to love Him honestly with all my heart, mind, strength, and neighbour as myself. Mother, preserve me in my earthly journey so that I can attain salvation at the end of my life, there to rejoice forever with you and the heavenly host. Amen

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP FOR A SPIRITUAL NEED (Optional)

Oh mother of perpetual help, with great confidence, I come before you today to invoke your unfailing aid. You have seen the wounds my lord and master has taken upon Himself to receive for my soul. You have seen the precious blood of your adorable Son flowing for my salvation, oh, Mother, know how much your Son, our lord Jesus Christ desires so much to save me. Behold, I cast myself at your feet and ask you to obtain the grace I stand so much in need of. O Mary, my queen and mother, O most loving of all mothers, obtain from me from Jesus, the source of all good things, these grace here (mention your intention). My mother of perpetual help, you desire my salvation far more than I do: our lord has given you to me for my mother; you have chosen to be called the mother of perpetual help. I trust not in my merit but in your powerful intercession, your goodness and mercy, and your powerful motherly love. Mother of perpetual help, for the love of your Son Jesus, our Redeemer, for the love of my soul, grant me what I humbly ask of you.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILY TO OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

(Optional)

Most Holy Virgin Mother of Perpetual Help, I thank you with great respect and love. Most humble and precious mother, I kneel before you to consecrate to you in a special manner my home and everybody and everything in it. I take you most loving as the mother of my family. Queen of heaven, make us worthy of becoming your favours children. Hold us under your protection. Protect us from sin and sinful occasions, and teach us to love Jesus, your most holy child. I thank you, most holy Mother, for your maternal protection and the numerous graces we have received through your powerful intercession. Grant that all who live may always invoke your good name, for your name o Mother is help in life and salvation in death. O Mother of Perpetual Help, bless and my household, pour your blessings on us, bless all those who think about you. So that we may contribute to you are family, may imitate you in love, humility, chastity and resignation to the will of God, so that if we serve you worthily in this world, we may praise you and thank you forever the world to come. Amen