



CARMELITAS MISIONERAS TERESIANAS

NOVENA OF BLESSED FRANCISCO PALAU

NOVEMBER 07, 2025

THE PATHS OF HOLINESS *Introduction*

Pope Francis, on the occasion of the Solemnity of All Saints, said that:

«Saints are not unreachable or distant heroes, but people like us ... Holiness is a gift offered to everyone for a happy life. Holiness is also a journey, a journey to be made together, helping each other, united with those excellent companions who are the saints».

(Angelus, 1/11/2023).

We are invited to accept this gift from God responsibly, advancing daily toward perfection, counting on God's grace.

During this novena in preparation for the feast of blessed Francis Palau, we will have the opportunity to reflect on holiness, guided by the teachings of our Blessed Founder.

*“We are all part of this Body of Christ;
we have all received, by pure gift, the charism and the call to live according to the
Palautian traits.”*

DAY 1.

Holiness, the work of God

In our reflection on holiness, we must ask whether holiness is the fruit of our efforts. It is known that holiness is a gift from God, a "gift" that we received in baptism, and that all Christians are called to be saints.

Pope Benedict XVI affirms that: *«A holy life is not primarily the result of our efforts, of our actions, because it is God, the three times Holy (cf. Is 6:3) who sanctifies us, it is the Holy Spirit's action that enlivens us from within, it is the very life of the Risen Christ that is communicated to us and that transforms us»*, (General Audience, Vatican City, April 13, 2011). Opening ourselves to God's action within us is essential for reaching this holiness.

Father Palau insists that *«all Christian perfection is based on charity" [...] "Charity has two actions; it comes forth in the soul in two operations. First, it unites the soul with God, and second, united with God, it dedicates the soul to the welfare of her neighbors»* (Letter 37, 1). He further emphasizes that perfection consists in fulfilling the precept of love: *«love of God and neighbour»* (Letter 89, 4), that is, true communion with the Church.

Holiness is, of course, charity lived:

«Your whole perfection consists in willing what God wills and fulfilling his orders»(Letter 99, 2).



✚ ***Do you want to be a saint?***

✚ ***What path are you willing to follow to live a holy life?***

Prayer for the canonization of our Father Founder

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Amen



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DAY 2.

Availability, the disciple's attitude.

✚ *How am I open and available for mission on a daily basis in my family, community, work, etc.?*

✚ *Am I willing to open my heart and let the Holy Spirit guide me and lead me along the paths of holiness?*

Attitude refers to a tendency or mindset that affects feelings and behaviour and is connected to one's own identity. Attitude can be understood as an inner willingness to offer one's life for the building up of the Church, with deeds as well as with words.

The attitude of availability, of readiness, is a way of life and a requisite for mission. It is an interior disposition to share the same feelings as Jesus, to make his way of life our own, thus permitting mission to become an integral part of our life of faith. A personal relationship with Jesus, a relationship of love, results in openness and availability: *«It is to desire what God wills, and not to desire whatever He does not will, it is to open your heart and offer yourself for whatever he asks and has prepared for you»* (Letter 42,1). This consists, as Father Palau points out, *"in making your will in all things, actions, thoughts and words, conform to God's will, so that it is no longer you who wills or not: it is God who wills in you, with you and for you»* (Letter 37,2).

From this perspective, to be a disciple is to collaborate with Jesus in the mission he received from his Father. As Father Palau puts it: *«If God wants it, if he commands it, there is nothing I can do; hands to the work, Theophila!»* (Struggle of the Soul with God 3,38).



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DAY 3.

Prayer, path to holiness.



Prayer is a relationship of friendship to which all believers are called: *«Prayer is an intimate dialogue with the Creator, a dialogue that begins in the human heart, reaching out to the heart of God and his mercy, capable of transforming our lives»* (Pope Francis). Prayer has the power to transform our hearts, our way of being, and also humanity.

Through prayer, we find peace, consolation, and guidance in times of uncertainty. The Gospel reveals that prayer was vital to Jesus' life. He often retreated to quiet places to pray, seeking strength, seeking to fulfil the will of his Father. This teaches us the importance of dedicating time to prayer.

Father Palau reminds us: *«Imitate Jesus Christ in this and you will find a true teacher and model of prayer. Follow him in all his ways; see him in the desert praying for all mankind, in the Garden of Olives agonizing for them, in preaching assisting them in their needs, on the Cross offering himself to the Father as a victim of atonement»* (Letter 6,7).

The life of prayer leads us to live always in the presence of God amidst the events and actions of our life, serving God in our neighbor with love and faithfulness: *«To take care of others is to take care of God, and to take care of God in his moral body is to be truly of God»* (Letter 6,4).

This is prayer as a path to holiness, which implies a constant relationship with the Church: *«It is the will of God that you engage in prayer for the welfare of the world»* (Letter 39,8). *«Pray from time to time for the needs of the wounded body of Jesus Christ and occupy yourself entirely for the salvation of others. This is your path. Engage yourself for the good of others, direct your strength, your virtues, your time, your life for the salvation of your neighbor»* (Letter 6,4).

✚ *Is prayer a source of transformation in my life?*

✚ *To whom and how do I pray?, Do I pray to the Church?*

*Prayer for the canonization of our
Father Founder*



DAY 4.

Faith, the path to holiness

Father Palau says: *«Is faith a virtue? Yes, because it makes the person who has it good. It makes him or her a good believer, faithful to the revealed truth, a member of the body of the Church, and a participant in the Kingdom of Heaven. It infuses in us the knowledge of those truths that are the substance, foundation, and beginning of all that we hope from God»*(Catechism of Virtues 39,12).

On the path to holiness, faith is a motor that moves us onwards and helps us in our personal and spiritual growth. It allows us to relate to the Church and live according to God's will. Faith is based on trust in God, acceptance of His will, obedience, and perseverance.

We can say that no one will be holy without a life of faith, and we cannot reach God except through faith: *«Faith makes the soul ascend and elevates it to God»* (Month of Mary 6,2); *“Without holiness no one will see the Lord»* (Heb. 12:14). But faith without works is meaningless, so we must manifest our faith by serving others and practicing virtues such as humility, patience, and hope. Faith leads us toward a fuller life, as blessed

Francisco Palau says, *«Revive your faith»* (Letter 88,9).

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 *How do I nourish and
feed my life of faith?*

 *Does faith help me on
the path to holiness?*

DAY 5.

Hope, the path to holiness.

Hope is a key component of human well-being, a driving force that motivates us to overcome adversity, pursue goals with determination, and build resilience. Without hope, we feel lost, life and action lose meaning.

Through faith, Christian hope is born from love and is founded on the love that springs from the Heart of Jesus pierced on the Cross. *«Indeed, the Holy Spirit, with his constant presence on the journey of the Church, is the One who radiates the light of hope in believers. He keeps it burning like a flame that never goes out, to give support and strength to our lives»* (Pope Francis).

For Father Palau, *«hope is a virtue infused in the soul that disposes and moves it to hope that God will grant in this life the assistance of grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and in the life to come, eternal life through our good works»* (Month of Mary 7, 2).

In our lives, there are joys, but also sufferings, which at times cause us to lose hope, but with Christian hope we can advance on our journey in the face of adversity: *«This hope does not yield in the face of difficulties, because it is founded on faith and nourished by charity, and in this way it makes it possible for us to go forward in life»* (Pope Francis).

Father Palau says that *«God's presence in our soul through pure faith produces hope»* (Month of Mary 7,2).

Hope is a path to holiness; it allows us to trust and to live with faith in God's Providence, to hope and aspire to eternal life: *«Beholding God as the supreme goodness possible to obtain, is the principal object of our hope»*. (Catechism of Virtues, 41,20).



✚ *Have I been a pilgrim of hope during this Jubilee Year? In what way or ways?*

✚ *In this time, when as a society we are experiencing a crisis of hope, have we been bearers of hope?*

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✚ *How do I live the call to “love and be loved”?*

✚ *To whom do I give my love?*

DAY 6.

Charity at the service of the Church.

Charity is the foundation of Christian life. We are all called to love the Church. As Father Palau says: *«Jesus is your beloved. [...] Your heart has been made to love, and to love Him alone»* (Letter 88,6). It is one of the greatest expressions of our love for the Church.

Father Palau, a tireless and persevering apostle, dedicated his life to serving his beloved Church through the various apostolic activities he carried out on behalf of those in need: *«You are God and my neighbors; I give myself and surrender myself to you as a slave, a servant, and a minister»* (MR 5,6). Charity consists in the practice of good, in unselfish help, in generosity, in acts of mercy and compassion, in small gestures of love. Charity is an approach to life that goes beyond occasional acts of generosity. Love moves us to act, it compels us to go out to the periphery, to the poor and needy, to care for others even when it entails sacrifices. To emphasize his love and dedication to the Beloved, Father Palau said: *«I die for love of her; you know that. I call her, I search for her, I see her, but very indistinctly. I am at her service. My Lord God, tell me, reveal to me what you want me to do to please her and to gratify her. You know that on the altar of the Cross I have sacrificed my life for her, my repose, and all that I hold most dear...»*. (MR VII, 5).

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DAY 7. Patience obtains all things.



Patience is a virtue that enables us to bear difficult, stressful, or adverse situations without losing calm and serenity. It is the ability to wait calmly and perseveringly, without giving in to frustration.

Patience is not an innate quality; rather, it is acquired and developed over time through constant practice. Thus, it helps us achieve our goals and brings us happiness. It allows us to listen attentively, understand the needs of others, and respond with empathy and understanding. It also allows us to face challenges with serenity.

So, how can we avoid impulsive reactions that can lead us to make mistakes or act thoughtlessly in the face of adversity?

Father Palau challenges us: «*When persecution and tribulation come, do you welcome them with an unwavering spirit, constancy, persistence and firmness?*» (Month of Mary 19,4). «*What do you do when because of your virtue, persecution or contradiction occurs? Do you weaken? Do you step back?*» (Month of Mary 17,4).

In our lives there are good and evil, success and failure, light and shadow. The virtue of patience is needed to reach our goals in a gradual yet consistent manner, though small daily efforts and actions.

Father Palau assures us that, «*It is the role of patience to tolerate, bear, endure and suffer the worries and persecutions that come to us because of virtue*» (Month of Mary, 19,2).

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✚ *How do I exercise patience in my daily life?*

✚ *How does the exercise of patience help me on the path to holiness?*



DAY 8.

Trust.

Like the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, we must trust that God has a plan for each of us, and that His love and care are constant. God knows our needs, so trusting Him is the greatest proof of our love that we can give in response to His love.

Trust is a sign and fruit of faithfulness. Trust is the foundation for strong and lasting relationships and it facilitates open and honest communication. Trust is an essential virtue for our life of faith that leads us to live holiness deeply and truly.

Trust is abandonment, surrender to the action of Divine Providence, and cannot be separated from hope, which assures us that God will care for those who serve him. In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ invites us to filial abandonment to the Providence of our heavenly Father (cf. Matt 6:26-34). He teaches us not to worry about material things, but to put spiritual things first, that is, the Kingdom of God and his Justice, often reminding us that He cares for us. Jesus calls us to live the present with serenity: *«Today's trouble is enough for today»* (Matt 6:34).

Father Palau insists that we must live with firm faith: *«I tell you this so that you too may abandon yourself to his providence. How well cared for is he who trusts in God!*

Engage yourself in prayer to acquire this trust and confidence because you need it. This trust and confidence presuppose faith in his providence, and providence is the fatherly care and solicitude that God has for us.

Let us allow God to take care of us, to govern us, to guide us, and this trust will shield us from the dreadful worries, anxieties, and fears that assail us, springing from our own illusions» (Letter 56,2).

«In time of need, let us learn to trust in God, to rely on him, to hope in his paternal protection» (Letter 46,3).

✚ *Have you experienced trust as total abandonment into God's hands? When and how?*

✚ *How does knowing that trust in God's Providence was key in Father Palau's life challenge you?*

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DAY 9.

Fidelity to the Church.

God calls us to be faithful, just as He has been faithful with His people Israel and with each of us in our salvation history.

In God's faithfulness, we find the security and hope we need to live according to His will. Faithfulness to the covenant God has established with the Church strengthens us in our relationship with Him and in our relationship with our brothers and sisters.

For Christians, fidelity is key to our relationship of loyalty to God and to our brothers and sister, that is, to the Church. It is the Church who recognizes this quality in Father Palau when she tells him: *«on various occasions you have given proofs of your love, of your obedience, of your fidelity, of your firmness, of your perseverance, and of your loyalty to me, and I have placed my love and trust in you»* (MR 8,28).

Father Palau is for us a living witness of this fidelity. He has been faithful to his Beloved, the Church: *«Receive, my beloved, my promises: accept my profession of fidelity, love, and loyalty...»* (MR III, 3): *«I swear to you love, loyalty, chastity, obedience, fidelity, poverty. Accept, O holy Church, accept, beautiful Virgin without stain, accept the offering of my whole person, offered completely to you. Do you accept it? Do you love me?»* (MR 9, 15). Following the example of Father Palau's, fidelity and loyalty should be the signs of love in the relationships we cultivate with the Church.



✚ *What testimony of fidelity to the Church do I give with my life?*

✚ *How do I live out my commitment to the Church?*

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