



NOVENA PRAYER TO THE CAMILLIAN MARTYRS OF CHARITY



CADIS

CAMILLIAN DISASTER SERVICE
INTERNATIONAL

Cover: *St. Camillus cares the plague victims at Colosseo*,
attributed to Sebastiano Conca, archived at
Casa Generalizia, Rome

This Novena prayer is inspired by the witnessing of the Martyrs of Charity of the Camillian Order.

On February 2, 1994, during the assembly of the major superiors in Manila, the Order has encouraged all religious to remember their exemplary deeds, to celebrate by highlighting the values of generosity, commitment, self-denial, fraternal love and the option for the poor, and to imitate their prophetic commitment in service to those who suffer most. As we pray this novena, let us discern with our conscience and keep it in our heart, the unsurpassable commitment of these men who risk their lives in service to the victims of man-made and natural disasters.

Opening prayer - to be prayed everyday

O God, our Father, we praise you for the passion, death, and resurrection of your Son Jesus, the martyr par excellence from whom all our salvation comes. You wanted to share your martyrdom to our brothers who have consumed their lives at the altar of charity. For your sake and their fidelity to their consecration, they spent their lives until their last breath in service to the victims of the plague and those ostracized by the society. Thus, testifying that no one has greater love than the one who gives his life for his friends.

Merciful Father, we pray to you and by the intercession of St. Camillus and the example of these men of charity, reinforce our desire to serve you always with the love of Christ your Son in our sick brothers and sisters, especially the desperate victims of disasters of all kinds.

And to you, our mother Mary, whom we loved and venerated as Our Lady of Health, listen to our prayer and intercede for us with your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.



DAY 1

Opening Prayer

Brother Hannibal MONTAGNOLI

He was part of the group of eight Camillians requested by Pope Clement VIII on June 2, 1595, to follow up a military expedition against the Turks in Hungary (Strigonia) to help the sick and the wounded. The group left towards the end of the same month from Trento, comforted by Camillus (who would have liked to join too) with adequate written instructions and recommendations. All fulfilled their task in a praiseworthy manner.

Bro. Hannibal, exhausted in assisting the infected and wounded soldier, especially during the battle of Strigonia, died happily on a carriageway, in the arms of a certain Augustinian religious, near Castel Nuovo of Hungary, on October 4, 1595, at the Danube bank.

Meditation

I urge you, then, brothers, remembering the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, dedicated and acceptable to God; that is the kind of worship for you, as sensible people. Do not model your behavior on the contemporary world, but let the renewing of your minds transform you, so that you may discern for yourselves what is the will of God -- what is good and acceptable and mature. (Rom 12: 1-2).

Thank you, Almighty God, for making me see men who are your Servants, men who despise this life, to serve you also amidst difficulties and dangers among your poor, only with the motive of holy charity'. (Cardinal Ginnasi, 1630).

The Lord's prayer - Hail Mary - Glory be to the Father

DAY 2

Opening Prayer

Brother Olimpio NOFRI

In 1630, “Asian disease” besieged many cities in Italy. Manzoni describes the horrors of the plague of Milan, in which most of the sixty “Ministers of the Sick” who lived in that city lost their lives.

In Milan alone, on that occasion, 17 sons of Camillus perished. Among them was the good Brother Olimpio Nofri, so dear to the Founder, whom he commended: “was excellent in the service to the poor.” The heroic Brother after having offered his strength in assisting the plague victims, knowing himself suffering from the disease, when his confreres took care of him, dragged himself out after receiving the sacraments of Porta Ludovica to the cemetery, awaiting his death, so as not to disturb them from serving others.

Meditation

In all truth I tell you unless a wheat grain falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain, but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me, must follow me, and my servant will be with me wherever I am. (Jn. 12, 24-26)

Jesus, help us to follow you not only with your noble thoughts, but to journey your way with the heart, that is, with the concrete ways in our daily life. Jesus, make us strong and courageous in living like the grain of wheat. Let us walk with humility on the way to the cross and remain forever faithful to you. Free us from the fear of the cross, from fear in front of the other derision, from the fear of giving our life as you did.

Lord, grant us the ability to discern good from evil, help us to unmask temptations that promise happiness but whose consequences are only void and delusion.

The Lord's prayer – Hail Mary – Glory be to the Father

DAY 3

Opening Prayer

Father Peter PELLICIONI (1579-1625)

Born in 1579 from a distinguished family. He was received to the Order by Camillus on December 25, 1595, and professed on January 8, 1598. Before entering, he had studied at the Brera College of the Jesuits, in Milan. After his profession, Camillo made him deepen his theological studies at the Roman College. He possessed a remarkable culture, besides his familiarity with words and ability to write. He had spontaneous dignified bearing, sociable, typical of a Milanian, and even in his ministry which much appreciated by the Founder.



Destined in Genoa after the VII General Chapter rendered assistance to the Spanish soldiers at the marine isolation off the coast of Savona. These soldiers put under quarantine because they were infected by a Castrense typhoid which is highly contagious almost like a plague. He devoted himself to their assistance without resting together with the other Camillians who are inspired by his words and deeds. Soon, however, he was infected by the disease and, transported to Genoa where he died on August 22, 1625, at the age of 46.

Meditation

*We are the wheat of Christ,
growing up in the sun of God
in kneaded spring water,
marked by the divine chrism.
In the bread, transform us, o Father,
into a sacrament of peace:
Bread, a Spirit, a Body,
the one, holy, Church, O Lord.
Called to soothe the pain
in the school of Father Camillus
let's join hands with his heart,
ministers of the suffering Son.
O Christ, glorious shepherd,
All power and honor to you
with the Father and the Holy Spirit
forever and ever. Amen.*

The Lord's prayer - Hail Mary - Glory be to the Father

DAY 4

Opening Prayer

Father Francis AMADIO

Born to a distinguished family, he entered the Order on April 22, 1590, and made his profession on March 15, 1592. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1594. He had been Superior in various communities and founded the house of Mantua. Nonetheless, he always behaved with modesty, edification, prudence, and charity. He participated very actively in the life of the Order and had been indicated by Camillus among the three names who could succeed Fr. Oppertis in the Generalate.

He died in Mantua in great holiness on July 26, 1629, when he was still the superior and provincial of Bologna.

Meditation

At times of sadness, suffering, and sickness, amid the anguish of persecution and grief, everyone looks for a word of consolation. We sense a powerful need for someone to be close and feel compassion for us. We experience what it means to be disoriented, confused, more heartsick than we ever thought possible. We look around us with uncertainty, trying to see if we can find someone who understands our pain. Our mind is full of questions, but answers do not come.

Reason by itself is not capable of making sense of our deepest feelings, appreciating the grief we experience and providing the answers we are looking for. At times like these, more than ever do we need the reasons of the heart, which alone can help us understand the mystery which embraces our loneliness. (Pope Francis, May 5, 2016).

The Lord's prayer - Hail Mary - Glory be to the Father

DAY 5

Opening Prayer

Father John COQUEREL (1575-1630)

Originally from Artois (France), he entered the Order at the age of 26 but had already served in the hospital. He professed in Florence on October 16, 1602. He became superior to various communities and that of Mantua, which had about twenty religious. He was the provincial of Bologna in 1629, after the death of Fr. Amadio and a few months before his death.

For the assistance to the sick in private houses, he wanted to engage in personally, supplying as much as he could to their various needs. After all, “doctors and barbers were almost all dead and the few who were there did not want to serve the sick; and the worse thing that happened is that the priests who remained, who were very few in number, had run away from the dying poor, who are in need of the sacraments of confession and communion” (Capilupi, 541). With his total dedication, he was also infected by the “evil” and died “of atrocious plague” on April 6, 1630.

Meditation

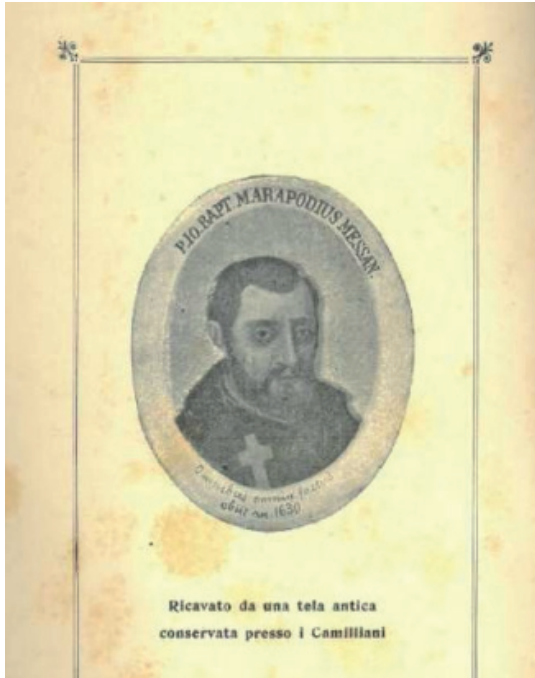
Throughout the ministry of mercy towards the sick, professed by a vow, we contribute towards the welfare and promotion of the whole human family, whose joys, hopes, grieves, and anxieties find an echo in our hearts, and we cooperate in the building up and growth of the whole Body of Christ. Therefore, following the example of our Holy Father Camillus, we commit ourselves to esteem evermore, to love with all our heart and to practice with all our strength, the ministry to the sick, even at risk to our life.
(Constitution art. 12)

The Lord's prayer - Hail Mary - Glory be to the Father

DAY 6

Opening Prayer

Father John Baptist MARAPODIO (1590-1630)



Entered the Order in 1606 when he was around 16 years old. He was welcomed by Camillus himself in Messina. He professed on Christmas Day of 1608. He distinguished himself in the development of our ministry which he accomplished “with profound love” following the example of the Founder who was always trying to encourage them.

In particular, his great virtues of prudence, charity, and observance to the Rules were appreciated by the

superiors and the people in Borgonovo Valtidone (Piacenza) where he was the superior of the house of five religious when the plague broke out in 1630. Most probably it was brought there by the merchants of Genoa and Milan, where they usually stocked the food to be sold in the city.

Since the beginning of the epidemic, Fr. Marapodio, after a fervent exhortation to his confreres, dedicated himself totally to the ministry, preceding everyone with his example and fervor, anxious to reach every sick person and administer the sacraments to them on time. He also reached the fractions and farmhouses located far away from where there was no one to bring relief. Likewise, to the confreres with whom he shared the work, he instructed them in the evening before or in the morning on time. The dead, sick and the members of the secular clergy who fled away during this period of greatest virulence, he traveled throughout the country wearing a habit and stole with the oil for the sick and the Eucharist, from house to house, more disposed even to bury the

dead and to disinfect the house and household goods and provided for those seriously in need.

After he became ill, he also began to feel the symptoms of evil in himself. Nevertheless, he wanted to visit the towns with great effort. He returned home after consuming the Eucharist, thinking that the other two confreres were already dead, he knelt down at the foot of the altar to pray. When Father Pinola returned with a confrere, he found him there, bent over himself. He died on September 10, 1630, at the age of 40. He was buried in the church of the Immaculate.

As soon as the news of his death spread, there was great dismay among the people for the loss of such a zealous help and comfort in the most difficult moment. The citizens of the village did not forget his zeal and, when the plague ceased, the few survivors wanted to immortalize his memory with a painting.

Meditation

It's not so much what we do, but how much love we put into doing it. It is not so much what we give, but how much love we put into giving (Mother Teresa).

The Lord's prayer - Hail Mary - Glory be to the Father

DAY 7

Opening Prayer

Brother James GIACOPETTI (1591-1657)

Born in Macerata on November 25, 1591. He came to Rome to study in 1608. He attended for some years at the Holy Spirit hospital to practice medicine and surgery. There he met Camillus and his confreres, and he was attracted to their ministry. He then asked and obtained entry into the Order in 1612. Despite his humanistic and philosophical studies as well as in medicine, he decided to remain a Brother. He was sent to Naples for the novitiate and, after his profession, went back to Rome on March 30, 1614.



Here, he assisted the Founder whom he venerated and followed as a model during the last months of his life and agony.

The Pammatone hospital in Genoa was his favorite place of work. There he was elected as head nurse and general director of the performance of service, and in collaboration with the other confreres, he “directed everything, supervised everything, provided everything here and there. He was always busy consoling the afflicted with sweet words, encouraging the fearful with hopes of faith, and animating everyone with patience.

He was to everyone a tender mother who, close to her dying son, uses all the affections of his heart and the powers of his soul to find always some new means to soothe his pains. And this with generosity, promptness, spontaneity, laughter, in other words, with a heart; for which everyone loved him and willingly accepted the advice, the warnings, the admonitions he gave to them for the greater good of their souls. The

number of conversions he obtained with his animated exhortations is great, and almost always he obtained the intent that they proposed with them ».

He did his best to assist the plague victims throughout 1656 and mid-1657 until on July 10 of that year; he was afflicted by the plague. Having obtained the transfer from his room to the common infirmary, he died, as he had predicted, on July 14, the death anniversary of the Founder. He was 65 years old.

Meditation

We implore to you God our Father, the source of all charity so that through the intercession of our Holy Father Camillus and by following the example of our glorious martyrs of charity, we will know how to conform our lives to our charism:

*Almighty and eternal God, Father of the poor,
comfort of the sick and hope of the dying,
We give you glory for the gift of life and the promise of
eternal life.*

*We know that you are always close to the afflicted,
to the poor, to all the weak and to those who suffer.*

*O God of tenderness and compassion,
accept the prayers we offer you
for our sick brothers and sisters.*

Increase their faith and trust in you.

*Comfort them with your loving presence
and, if this is your will, give them back their health,
give them renewed strength in body and soul.*

*O God, the source of all strength,
guard and protect those who take care of the sick
and assist those who are dying.*

*Give them a firm and gentle spirit to give comfort and relief.
Make them an even more radiant sign of your transfiguring
love (John Paul II).*

The Lord's prayer - Hail Mary - Glory be to the Father

DAY 8

Opening Prayer

Father Sebastian BIANCHI (1608-1672)

From a noble family, he studied at the University of Bologna around the year 1631-1632. He entered the Order, in Rome, on June 28, 1632, and began his novitiate on July 1, 1632, and professed on July 2, 1634.

He became part of various communities from Monreale to Genoa from where he transferred to Madrid towards the end of 1644. He remained in this city for the rest of his life. He was made superior for several times and finally, provincial of Spain until his death in 1672 during the difficult period of the Province coupled with the friction between the Italians and the Spaniards. His death occurred on September 13, 1672 (the Regi says on the 15th) due to a malignant fever during his term of service at a hospice in Madrid. Fr. Boselli who was then his usual companion in the ministry attested at his solemn funeral that there was a great multitude of people and expressions of veneration. The Count of Medellin even “rightly raised the small finger of his right hand,” another wanted his hat and another one his rosary.

Meditation

This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I shall no longer call you servants because a servant does not know the master's business; I call you friends because I have made known to you everything I have learned from my Father. You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; so that the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name. My command to you is to love one another. (John 15,12-17)

The Lord's prayer - Hail Mary - Glory be to the Father

DAY 9

Opening Prayer

Father John Baptist PASQUALI

He entered the Order in 1588 and was among the first to profess in Naples on May 3, 1592. He was at the Founder's school for many years and often became his traveling companion. Fr. De Martino testifies in these words: "a religious of much virtue and charity, he entered (in the service to the plague victims) with so much fervor and spirit despite his age of 60 years, indefatigable for the health of their souls; having seen him several times, under the scorching heat of the sun burned as black as my clothes for the many labors, but so cheerful and merry. He arrived in the houses to administer the Sacraments and finding all are sick.

While waiting to administer the soul, he addressed the needs of the body first, by making beds, making fire, feeding, washing dishes, sweeping the house, feeding the little children, and doing what those petty ones needed, so that everyone was called the indefatigable full of charity. On July 24, he got contaminated with the plague ».

After three days at Paolino (Palermo), he asked to be admitted to the common hospital where he died on July 31, 1624.

Meditation

Are you not familiar with the very moving expressions of Jesus when he talks about the good thing, which we find in the Gospel of John: "No one has greater love than this: to give his life for his friends." (Jn 15, 13). This love, tender and strong, is a source of continuous amazement because it exceeds every measure and every calculation. Love finds here the manifestation of its concreteness: to give life. Not something bound by time. The measure of love is to have no measure. Love "bears all," as in the hymn of charity of St. Paul (1 Cor 13). The only thing that cannot stand is when we put on the brakes and limits. Love has in itself a rhythm of the crescendo. Love is not a vague feeling, but an overwhelming, indomitable fact against all logic.

The Lord's prayer - Hail Mary - Glory be to the Father

Prayer For The Victims Of Any Disaster

For all the victims of disasters, for the persons who lost their lives, for their dear ones, for all survivors, and for all those responding to emergencies, we pray:

Heavenly Father, who created and protected every existence, You know all our sorrows and sufferings. May all those victims of disasters be received in your peace. Receive us in your mercy as we pray all our brothers and sisters who had been buried by the forces precipitated by nature.

Bring them to your home. Console the pains of the many families; wipe out the tears of our brothers and sisters; protect the solitude of the many orphans.

Fill us with your courage so that the pain will become a path of growth and hope. Awaken the hearts of all Christians and of men and women of goodwill, who desire to commit themselves so that the wounds of those who suffer from these calamities will experience the comfort of fraternal solidarity,

You who lives and reigns forever and ever.

AMEN.

Our Father, the Hail Mary, Gloria



CAMPAIGN MARTYRS OF CHARITY

UNITED IN PRAYER

May 25



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