

Catholic Traditions & Devotions

PRACTICES THAT CAN DEEPEN YOUR
LOVE FOR GOD AND THE CHURCH

The Church gives us many ways to pray. You do not need to do all of them. Find the practices that help you love Christ more faithfully.



Sacraments, Sacramentals & Devotions

The seven sacraments were instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church. Sacramentals and devotions are different: they dispose us to receive grace and help sanctify the ordinary circumstances of life, but they do not replace the sacraments.

A healthy devotion points beyond itself—toward Jesus, deeper conversion, the Eucharist, charity and the life of the Church.

The Rosary

- **What it is:** A Scripture-based Marian prayer centered on the mysteries of Christ.
- **Try it:** Begin with one decade. Name one intention and stay with one mystery rather than racing through the words.

Eucharistic Adoration

- **What it is:** Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament exposed in a monstrance or reserved in the tabernacle.
- **Try it:** Bring Scripture, a journal or simply silence. You do not have to fill the hour with words.

Divine Mercy & Sacred Heart

Divine Mercy devotion emphasizes trust in God's mercy and mercy toward others, especially through the Divine Mercy image, Chaplet and Hour of Mercy.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus focuses our attention on Christ's human and divine love, often expressed through prayer, First Friday devotion and consecration.

Saints, Novenas & Intercession

Catholics ask the saints to pray with and for us, just as we ask fellow Christians on earth for prayer. Worship belongs to God alone.

A novena is a pattern of prayer over nine days (or another established nine-part pattern). It is not a spiritual vending machine; it is a way to persevere in prayer and entrust an intention to God.

Stations, Blessings & Sacramentals

- **Stations of the Cross:** Meditation on Christ's Passion.
- **Blessed medals, scapulars, and holy water:**
Sacramentals that point us toward faith and prayer, not magic objects.
- **Home blessings:** Prayer that places daily life under God's care.
- **Sign of the Cross:** A simple profession of Trinitarian faith that can frame the whole day.

Choose What Bears Fruit

- Does this devotion draw me closer to Christ?
- Does it deepen participation in the sacraments?
- Does it produce greater charity, humility, and trust?
- Am I treating the practices superstitiously or fearfully?
- Is it appropriate for my state in life and season?

FREEDOM MATTERS

Catholic devotions are rich and varied. Most are optional. You are not less Catholic because every devotion is not part of your personal prayer life.