



THE LEGION OF MARY

THE POMPEIAN NOVENA

The Pompeian Novena, or also know as the "54-Day Rosary Novena" is an uninterrupted series of Rosaries in honor of Our Lady, revealed to the incurably sick Fortuna Agrelli by Our Lady of Pompeii at Naples in 1884. For thirteen months Fortuna Agrelli had endured dreadful sufferings and torturous cramps; she had been given up by the most celebrated physicians. On February 16, 1884, the afflicted girl and her relatives commenced a novena of Rosaries. The Queen of the Holy Rosary favored her with an apparition on March 3rd. Mary, sitting upon a high throne, surrounded by luminous figures, held the divine Child on her lap, and in her hand a Rosary. The Virgin Mother and the holy Infant were clad in gold-embroidered garments. They were accompanied by St. Dominic and St. Catherine of Siena. The throne was profusely decorated with flowers; the beauty of Our Lady was marvelous. Blessed Virgin said: *Child, thou has invoked me by various titles and hast always obtained favors from me. Now, since thou hast called me by that title so pleasing to me, 'Queen of the Holy Rosary,' I can no longer refuse the favor thou dost petition; for this name is most precious and dear to me. Make three novenas, and thou shalt obtain all.*

Once more the Queen of the Holy Rosary appeared to her and said, *Whoever desires to obtain favors from me should make three novenas of the prayers of the Rosary, and three novenas in thanksgiving.* Obedient to Our Lady's invitation, Fortuna and her family completed the six novenas whereupon the young girl was restored to perfect health and her family showered with many blessings.

The Novena consists of fifteen decades of the Rosary (starting with the Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious mystery) each day, for twenty-seven days in petition; then immediately fifteen decades each day for twenty-seven days in thanksgiving, whether or not the request has been granted.

A laborious Novena, but a Novena of love to our Lady of the Rosary, *Our Lady of Pompeii*. You who are sincere will not find it too difficult, if you really wish to obtain your request. The miracle is said to have made a very deep impression on Pope Leo XIII, who urged all Christians to love the Rosary and say it fervently.

The loving God wants to give us everything we need to walk the path that will take us to heaven and to be happy. Jesus assures and encourages us: "Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive." (Matt.21:22); "be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer." (Rom.12:12); "pray without ceasing!" (1Thess.5:17). You cannot grow discouraged and give up prayer in times of total dryness and loss of all sweetness in God. True prayer depends not on feelings, but on will. "If we ask for grace, God will give it, but we need to receive it; and to receive it, you need self-denial. Love does not rely on words or feelings but on action. It is an act of will, it is a gift, that is, giving; intellect, will, heart – these three powers must be disciplined in prayer", writes St Faustina (Diary 392).