

Another Account of the Life of Saint Pancratius

Martyr; one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. According to tradition he was born in Phrygia, brought to Rome, and, professing his Faith, was beheaded on the Via Aurelia, when only fourteen, but in what persecution is doubtful. He is the avenger of per jurors. Numerous monuments to him exist throughout Europe, among them the church built by Pope Symmachus, c. 500, over his tomb. The first church built at Canterbury by Saint Augustine was named in honor of Saint Pancras as were many ancient churches all over England. The London borough of Saint Pancras gives its name to a railroad terminal in London. Relics in his own church at Rome, destroyed in 1798, head in the Lateran Basilica. Feast, Roman Calendar, 12 May.

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NOVENA TO SAINT PANCRATIUS

Recited from: May 3rd through May 11th



Feast Day: May 12th

Novena

The word Novena derives its name from the Latin word “novem” meaning “nine.” A novena can be either a private or public devotion in the Catholic Church to obtain special graces.

NOVENA TO SAINT PANCRATIUS

The Benefits of praying this Novena are:

1. good health and productive work;
2. success in work; and
3. being free from adversities and ill-intentioned persons.

Novena Prayer

(Said daily **before** beginning novena prayers)

Act of Contrition:

Jesus, my God,
how often have I offended Thee and,
despite my firm promise never to sin again,
how many times have I left Thy sweet company
to follow the path of sin!
Dearest Lord, I am sorry for my past negligences.
I regret this weakness of mine.
I would be ashamed to promise again
that I will not sin were it not for the confidence
I have in Thy love and Thy mercy.
I kneel in Thy presence,
hopeful that despite so many past violations of Thy commandments,
notwithstanding so many failures to correspond with Thy grace,
I can still repent.
I know that there is time to make a new beginning.
With Thy aid I will strive to be faithful to Thee,
with Thy assistance I will do my utmost to serve Thee faithfully - and
always. Do Thou, dear Jesus, help me.
Amen.

The basilica of San Pancrazio fuori le Mura was built by Pope Symmachus (498-514), over the *Catacombe di Ottavilla*, where the body of the young martyr had been buried. In the 17th century, it was given to the Carmelites.

In Spain St. Pancras is referred to as *San Pancraccio*. He is popularly venerated as the patron saint of jobs and health. He is offered parsley.^[5] His image in statue form can be found in many bars, restaurants and other businesses.

Some of his relics found their way to England, which is why many of the nation's churches are dedicated to him; St Pancras Old Church is believed to be one of the oldest sites of Christian worship in England.

Pancras is normally invoked against cramps, false witness, headache, and perjury. He is a patron saint of children.

First Day

Because he was said to have been martyred at the age of fourteen during the persecution under Diocletian, Pancras would have been born around 289, at a place designated as near Synnada, a city of Phrygia Salutaris, to parents of Roman citizenship. His mother Cyriada died during childbirth, while his father Cleonius died when Pancras was eight years old. Pancras was entrusted to his uncle Dionysius' care. They both moved to Rome to live in a villa on the Caelian Hill. They converted to Christianity, and Pancras became a zealous adherent of the religion.

During the persecution of Christians by Diocletian, around 303 AD, he was brought before the authorities and asked to perform a sacrifice to the Roman gods. Diocletian, impressed with the boy's determination to resist, promised him wealth and power, but Pancras refused, and finally the emperor ordered him to be decapitated on the Via Aurelia, on May 12, 303 AD; this traditional year of his martyrdom cannot be squared with the saint's defiance of Diocletian in Rome, which the emperor had not visited since 286, nor with the mention of Cornelius (251-253) as bishop of Rome at the time of the martyrdom, as the most recent monograph on Pancras's texts and cult has pointed out.

A Roman matron named Ottavilla recovered Pancras's body, covered it with balsam, wrapped it in precious linens, and buried it in a newly built sepulchre dug in the Catacombs of Rome. Pancras' head was placed in the reliquary that still exists today in the Basilica of San Pancrazio.

Devotion to Pancras definitely existed from the fifth century onwards, for the basilica of San Pancrazio was built by Pope Symmachus (498-514), on the place where the body of the young martyr had been buried; his earliest *passio* seems to have been written during this time. Gregory the Great gave impetus to the cult of Pancras, sending Augustine to England carrying relics of that saint and including his legend in *Liber in gloria martyrum*. In medieval iconography, Pancras was depicted as a young soldier, due to his association with the paired soldier saints Nereus and Achilleus. By the mid-nineteenth century, pious embroidery set Pancras's martyrdom in the arena among wild beasts, where the panther refrains from attacking and killing him until the martyr gives the beast permission.

Our hearts have been created to love.
It is God Whom you have to love most,
more than all beings,
more than all riches of the world,
and in this way you will avoid many disappointments.
St. Pancratius did it so
and by it he obtained many favors from God.
Ask him fervently for this grace,
you will live peacefully
and will obtain his protection in all your needs.

**Prayer for each day to the Blessed Trinity,
to whom St. Pancratius was greatly devoted.**

1. Prayer to the Eternal Father

I believe, Heavenly Father,
all that Faith teaches,
and in that faith I wish to live and die;
through the intercession of St. Pancratius
grant us good health to fulfill our duties.

Our Father...
Hail Mary...
Glory be...

2. Prayer to God the Son

O good Jesus,
grant me the virtue of Hope in your promises
in the same measure that St. Pancratius
always trusted in your Providence,
so that I may, through his intercession,
obtain work and success in all my undertakings.

Our Father...
Hail Mary...
Glory be...

3. Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Grant me the virtue of Charity
that I may love God above all things
and my neighbor for the love of God,
as St. Pancratius did.
Through his intercession
I hope to obtain this grace
and that of being free from adversities
and from ill-intentioned persons.

Our Father...
Hail Mary...
Glory be...

4. Concluding Prayer

O glorious St. Pancratius,
I beg thee to obtain for me
all the graces that I need,
but especially health and work,
so that I may appear before thee
to thank God for the favors
I received through your powerful intercession.
Amen.

Saint Pancratius

Saint Pancras was a Roman citizen who converted to Christianity, and was beheaded for his faith at the age of just 14 around the year 304. His name is Greek and literally means "the one that holds everything".

From an early stage, Saint Pancras was venerated together with Saints Nereus and Achilleus in a shared feast day and Mass formula on 12 May. In 1595, 25 years after Pope Pius V promulgated the Tridentine Missal, Saint Domitilla was added also.

Since 1969 Saint Pancras is venerated separately, still on 12 May. He is, traditionally, the second of the Ice Saints.

The Ice Saints is a name given to St. Mamertus, St. Pancras, and St. Servatius in Flemish, French, Dutch, Hungarian, German, Austrian, Polish, Swiss and Croatian folklore. They are so named because their feast days fall on the days of May 11, May 12, and May 13 respectively. In Flanders St. Boniface of Tarsus is counted amongst the Ice Saints as well; St. Boniface's feast day falling on May 14. The period from May 12 to May 15 was noted to bring a brief spell of colder weather in many years, including the last nightly frosts of the spring, in the Northern Hemisphere under the Julian Calendar. The introduction of the Gregorian Calendar in 1582 involved skipping 10 days in the calendar, so that the equivalent days from the climatic point of view became May 22–25.

In Poland and the Czech Republic, the Ice Saints are St. Pancras, Saint Servatius and St. Boniface of Tarsus (i.e., May 12 to May 14). To the Poles, the trio are known collectively as *zimni ogrodnicy* (cold gardeners), and are followed by *zimna Zośka* (cold Sophias) on the feast day of St. Sophia which falls on May 15. In Czech, the three saints are collectively referred to as "ledoví muži" (ice-men or icy men), and Sophia is known as "Žofie, ledová žena" (Sophia, the ice-woman).

In Sweden, the German legend of the ice saints has resulted in the belief that there are special "iron nights," especially in the middle of June, which are susceptible to frost. The term "iron nights" (*järnnätter*) has probably arisen through a mistranslation of German sources, where the term "Eismänner" (ice men) was read as "Eisenmänner" (iron men) and their nights then termed "iron nights," which then became shifted from May to June.

Eighth Day

(Novena Prayer on page 2)

Just as you treasure the picture of your parents
and other dear persons,
so also should you treasure the image of St. Pancratius,
assured that from heaven above he sees you
as you kneel before his altar.
The greater the fervor with which you do it
the more he will intercede for you before God
that he may grant you the graces you want
to obtain in this novena,
for you as well as for your family.

(Prayer to the Blessed Trinity as on First Day on pages 3-4-Numbers 1 through 4)

Ninth Day

(Novena Prayer on page 2)

Now that you are ending this novena,
you are encouraged
and you feel a greater desire to love St. Pancratius
and by it to make yourself worthy of attaining heaven
where you will keep his company.
Be sure that he waits for you there,
and you will fulfill your duties faithfully,
leading the life of a good Christian;
and thus obtain his protection for yourself and for your family.

(Prayer to the Blessed Trinity as on First Day on pages 3-4-Numbers 1 through 4)

Second Day

(Novena Prayer on page 2)

It is the law of God to love our neighbor,
but only in as much as this love does not hinder us from
loving God.
St. Pancratius gave us the examples,
thus leading many souls in the right path to heaven.
Let us ask him from the depth of our hearts
to give us the grace to love our neighbors
as ourselves in order to love God better;
in this way we shall obtain many graces
from the glorious St. Pancratius.

(Prayer to the Blessed Trinity as on First Day on pages 3-4-Numbers 1 through 4)

Third Day

(Novena Prayer on page 2)

St. Pancratius possessed such a kind heart
that he always sympathized with the poor
and the unfortunate;
for this reason he obtained so many graces from heaven.
You too, should imitate this virtue and thereby obtain,
through his intercession,
many favors from God.

(Prayer to the Blessed Trinity as on First Day on pages 3-4-Numbers 1 through 4)

Fourth Day

(Novena Prayer on page 2)

The glorious St. Pancratius not only tried to be good himself
but also strived to lead other souls to heaven,
and for this reason God bestowed on him
such a great power in behalf of those devoted to him.
You too, should try to spread this devotion
and to lead others to heaven.
In this way you will gain many graces,
especially those that you like to receive in this novena.

(Prayer to the Blessed Trinity as on First Day on pages 3-4-Numbers 1 through 4)

Fifth Day

(Novena Prayer on page 2)

There are many persons in the world who due to human respect,
fail to serve God wholeheartedly.
Be not one of them,
but rather imitate St. Pancratius
in defending always the truth and the good,
for the sake of God.
In this way,
you will obtain all that you need
through the intercession of St. Pancratius
who is always ready to hear your prayer.

(Prayer to the Blessed Trinity as on First Day on pages 3-4-Numbers 1 through 4)

Sixth Day

(Novena Prayer on page 2)

One of the hardest things for the heart
is to forgive those who have injured us.
Ask St. Pancratius to obtain for you this grace
when someone has offended you,
since he forgave even those who martyred him.
Be sure you will then be more at peace
and will obtain for yourself and for your family
graces that grow more than you can hope for.

(Prayer to the Blessed Trinity as on First Day on pages 3-4-Numbers 1 through 4)

Seventh Day

(Novena Prayer on page 2)

In this world,
great patience is needed for everything,
for more obstacles always come in our way than we expect.
Imitate St. Pancratius who always conforms his will
to the Holy Will of God,
and thus succeeded in living happily
and becoming a great saint amidst difficulties.
Ask him fervently to help you,
and he will grant you this grace and many others.

(Prayer to the Blessed Trinity as on First Day on pages 3-4-Numbers 1 through 4)