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PETITIONS & THANKSGIVING LETTERS

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Novena Notes

Raising the Bar

This Sunday's Readings are easy and at the same time, challenging.

In the first Reading from the Wisdom Book of Sirach, the scribe, Ben Sira, offers the following choices:

"God has set before you fire and water, to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand."

"Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him.

Given these rather stark choices, I am sure everyone will choose: 'water - life - good'.

Now comes the challenging part, it is not enough that we chose and have received the graces and blessings. We must use the graces and blessings. So, how can I be 'water' (i.e. life-giving) to another? How do I choose 'Life' and how can I be 'Good'? Well, Jesus taught his disciples at the Sermon on the Mount just how to do be life-giving, loving and good.

But Jesus 'raised the bar' in the Gospels. Jesus has pushed the Old Testament commandments and laws further. It is not enough to just say that we "obeyed" the 10 commandments because we keep the Sabbath holy by regularly attending Sunday masses, and we have not murdered anyone, committed adultery or stolen something. At the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus extended and expanded the familiar Old Testament teachings. In today's Gospel's passage, we heard:

How we can "kill" with just anger.

How a person may commit adultery with a woman in his heart by just "looking at her with lust".

How 'divorce' may cause a person or their spouse to commit adultery.

Not to swear at all and be very clear in our statements: *"Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.'"*

In raising the bar, Jesus wants more from each of his disciples. This is most evident when he taught the famous and now, the hallmark of Christianity: *'Love thy Enemies'*. Jesus said:

"If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5: 46-48)

Yes, we may have chosen wisely and are on the right path to Heaven. But as Christians, we must be different. We must be special. In fact, we are called to be 'perfect'. Really tough! But God continues to give us the graces to be the people that Jesus wants us to be. In our everyday interactions with family, friends and especially with people who are not like us or who are not our friends, do we offer 'water', 'life' and 'goodness'?

Are we with God while we are on this life-journey?

"The Gospel does not only get us to Heaven - more importantly, and before everything else, it gets us to God". (Randy Alcorn)

Reflection by Ros

Readings & responses for the week

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday 15 February	Eccl 15: 15-20, 1 Cor 2: 6-10, Mt 5: 17-37 They are happy who follow God's law!
Monday, 16 February	Jm 1:1-11, Mk 8:11-13 Let your love come to me and I shall live.
Tuesday, 17 February Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Orders	Jm 1: 12-18, Mk 8:14-21 Happy the man whom you teach, O Lord.
Wednesday, 18 February Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:12-18; 2 Cor 5:20-6:2; Mt 6:1-6,16-18 Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.
Thursday, 19 February	Deut 30:15-20; Lk 9:22-25 Happy the man who has placed his trust in the Lord.
Friday, 20 February	Is 58:1-9; Mt 9:14-15 A humble, contrite heart, O God, you will not spurn.
Saturday, 21 February	Is 58:9-14; Lk 5:27-32 Show me, Lord, your way so that I may walk in your truth

NOVENA DEVOTIONS ON SATURDAY

8.00am, 10.00am, 12.00pm, 4.00pm, 5.30pm

2.00pm (Mandarin)

MASS ON WEEKDAYS

12:15pm, 6.30pm

9.00am, 6.30pm Public Holiday

(confession will be 30 minutes before Mass)

MASS ON SATURDAY

7.00am, 6.30pm (Sunset)

MASS ON SUNDAY

8.00am, 10.00am, 12.00pm, 5.30pm

(confession will be 30 minutes before Mass)

SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES UPDATE

No booking is required. There will not be standing room allowed in the main church.

RECEPTION OPERATING HOURS

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 8.00pm

Lunch Hour 11.45am to 12.45pm

Saturday 7.30am to 8.00pm

Sunday 8.30am to 1.30pm & 4.30pm to 7.00pm

Closed on Public Holiday

GIFTSHOP OPERATING HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

10.30am to 6.30pm

Lunch Hour 12.15pm to 12.45pm

Saturday 8.30am to 6.30pm

Sunday 9.00am to 1.30pm

Closed on Thursday and Public Holiday

CYN SCHEDULES



<https://novenachurch.com>

Chinese New Year Schedules

16 February (Monday)

Weekday Mass: 12.15pm
(no 6.30pm Mass)
CNY Eve Mass: 10.00pm
pre-event at 9.30pm

17 February (Tuesday)

Public Holiday Mass:
9.00am & 6.30pm

18 February (Wednesday)

Ash Wednesday &
Public Holiday Mass: 9.00am,
12.15pm & 6.30pm



RECEPTION CNY PH

16 FEB: 9AM to 1PM
17, 18 FEB : CLOSED

SCALA, CANTEEN

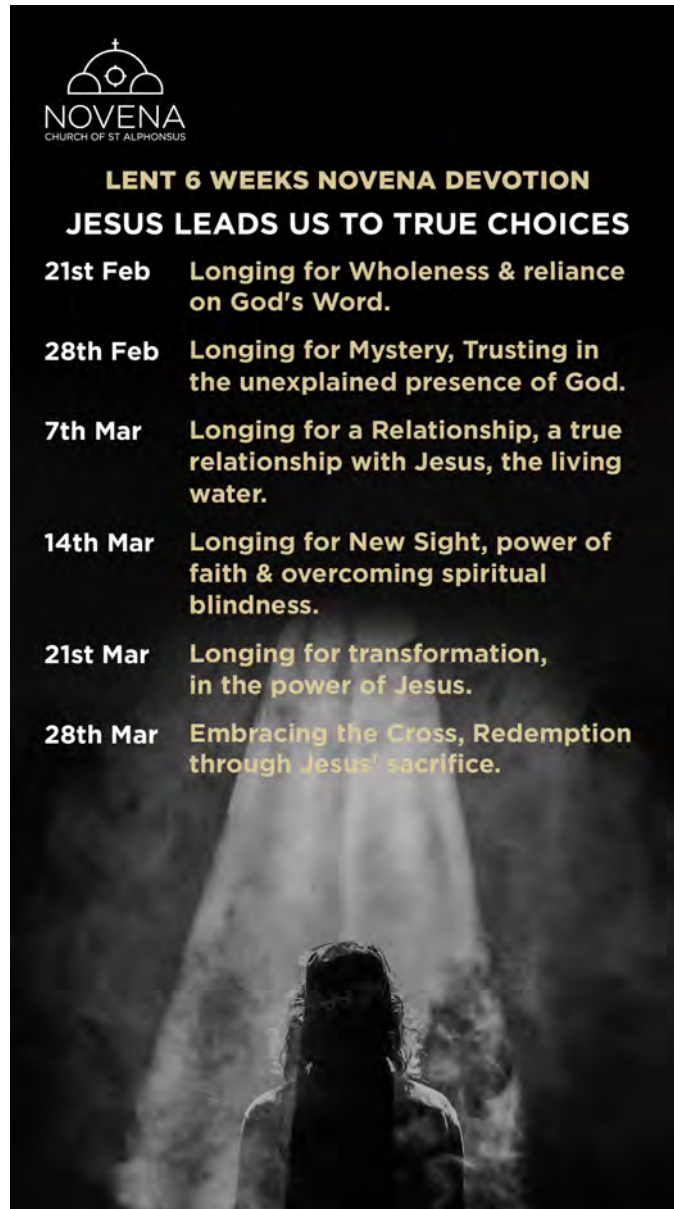
14 & 21 FEB CLOSED RESUMES
ON 28 FEB, 2026

LENTEN NOVENA THEMES



LENT 6 WEEKS NOVENA DEVOTION JESUS LEADS US TO TRUE CHOICES

- 21st Feb** Longing for Wholeness & reliance on God's Word.
- 28th Feb** Longing for Mystery, Trusting in the unexplained presence of God.
- 7th Mar** Longing for a Relationship, a true relationship with Jesus, the living water.
- 14th Mar** Longing for New Sight, power of faith & overcoming spiritual blindness.
- 21st Mar** Longing for transformation, in the power of Jesus.
- 28th Mar** Embracing the Cross, Redemption through Jesus' sacrifice.



GIFTSHOP CNY PH

16 FEB: 9AM to 1PM
CLOSED ON
17, 18, 19 FEB

ASH WEDNESDAY



Church of Saint Alphonsus
(Novena Church)

Ash wednesday 2026 Schedule

Morning Mass
9.00am

Afternoon Mass
12:45pm

Evening Mass
6:30pm

February 18
Wednesday

STATIONS OF THE CROSS



<https://novenachurch.com>

The Stations of the Cross



Fridays of Lent, 6.00pm

February 20, 27

March 6, 13, 20, 27

Main Church