



NOVENA TO BLESSED SISTER MARIA ANTONINA KRATOCHWIL

*School Sister of Notre Dame
(21 August 1881 - 2 October 1942)*



A Patron of Shalom

INTRODUCTION

Sister Maria Antonina is portrayed in this Novena as the Blessed One, who was:

- steadfast in accepting the cross
- seeking God in daily prayer
- shining her attitude of heroic faith
- loving and creative in the work of education
- obedient to God in all things
- simple and poor in spirit and in life
- overcoming evil with true love
- courageous follower of Jesus
- model of permanent union with the Father

Reflecting on dimensions of her spiritual life, in light of the Word of God and our Constitution *You Are Sent*, offers direction for our lives. Let us listen to the challenges and allow them to touch our inner being, so that we become authentic witnesses of God's love, as she was.

* Selected invocations are from the Litany to Blessed Antonina; Poppies – a symbol of sacrifice, a symbol of the blood shed by soldiers and soaked in the ground, a symbol of martyrdom.



PRAYER FOR EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA

**Triune God,
we stand before you
to express our gratitude
for the gift of our Sister
Blessed Maria Antonina Kratochwil,
who in her life was:**

- Day I: steadfast in accepting the cross
- Day II: seeking God in daily prayer
- Day III: shining her attitude of heroic faith
- Day IV: loving and creative in the work of education
- Day V: obedient to God in all things
- Day VI: simple and poor in spirit and in life
- Day VII: overcoming evil with true love
- Day VIII: courageous follower of Jesus
- Day IX: model of permanent union with the Father

**Through her intercession we ask you
to open our hearts and give us the graces
that you bestowed upon our Sister
so that we may be authentic witnesses
of your love in our world today.**

Amen.



DAY I – 3 June
Sister Maria Antonina

STEADFAST IN ACCEPTING THE CROSS

WORD OF GOD: Jesus was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake, will save it.” (Lk 9: 23-24)

OUR CONSTITUTION: In carrying out Christ’s mission to bring all to oneness with the Father, we experience and accept the paschal mystery in our lives. (YAS, C 5)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! Blessed Sister Maria Antonina imitated you in accepting the cross and gave her life out of love. Through the example of her life she became the light, and neither fear nor doubt darkened her love for you. Grant us the grace of patience and perseverance in adversities, so that we are able to bring hope to the suffering and the poor.

***Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
steadfast in accepting the cross,
PRAY FOR US!***



DAY II – 4 June
Sister Maria Antonina

SEEKING GOD IN DAILY PRAYER

WORD OF GOD: Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on rock. (Mt 7: 24)

OUR CONSTITUTION: Sacred scripture, the living word of God, is vital for our life and prayer. God reveals himself to us through scripture, and from it we learn to recognize him acting in our lives. We are attentive to God's word and action, open to any way the Spirit calls us. (YAS, C 31)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! In the life of our Blessed Sister Maria Antonina you had first place. Inspire in us the desire to listen to and fulfill your word, and in union with you gladly proclaim the Gospel to the people to whom you send us.

*Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
seeking God in daily prayer,
PRAY FOR US!*



DAY III – 5 June
Sister Maria Antonina

SHINING HER ATTITUDE OF HEROIC FAITH

WORD OF GOD: Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. (Jn 14: 12)

OUR CONSTITUTION: As Jesus was sent to show the Father's love to the world, we are sent to make Christ visible by our very being, by sharing our love, faith, and hope. (YAS, C 4)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! Blessed Sister Maria Antonina gave you her whole life and in faith found deep peace and hope. At a time when so many people cannot find meaning in their lives, strengthen our trust in you so that we are able to lead people to you through the witness of our lives.

*Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
shining your attitude of heroic faith,
PRAY FOR US!*



DAY IV – 6 June
Sister Maria Antonina

**LOVING AND CREATIVE IN THE
WORK OF EDUCATION**

WORD OF GOD: Jesus realized the intention of their hearts and took a child and placed it by his side and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me." (Lk 9: 47-48)

OUR CONSTITUTION: Urged by the love of Christ, we choose to express our mission through ministry directed toward education. For us, education means enabling persons to reach the fullness of their potential as individuals created in God's image and assisting them to direct their gifts toward building the earth. (YAS, C 22)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! Blessed Sister Maria Antonina bestowed motherly love upon children, especially the poor and abandoned, and directed their hearts to God. Youth saw in her a mother who was worried about their maturation into true humanity. We ask you to grant us the grace to be able to support the children and young people of today's world in their development to the fullness of humanity.

*Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
loving and creative
in the work of education,
PRAY FOR US!*



DAY V – 7 June
Sister Maria Antonina

OBEDIENT TO GOD IN ALL THINGS

WORD OF GOD: ... looking at those seated in the circle he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.” (Mk 3: 34-35) “For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mk 10: 45)

OUR CONSTITUTION: Love urges us to unite our will with God’s. (YAS, C 19)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! Blessed Sister Maria Antonina, strengthened by grace, followed your example, ready to accept the shortcomings, insults, persecution, and even death for the sake of the Kingdom of God. At the present time in our history, when violence, lies, and brutality so often frighten us, grant that we find the strength to overcome any difficulties in fulfilling God’s will.

*Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
obedient to God in all things,
PRAY FOR US!*



DAY VI – 8 June
Sister Maria Antonina

SIMPLE AND POOR IN SPIRIT AND IN LIFE

WORD OF GOD: For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake he became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich. (2 Cor 8: 9)

OUR CONSTITUTION: Fundamentally, we stand before God in total emptiness, humbly accepting our humanity. We cling to nothing but the Lord, who gifts us with peace and joy, enables us to be content with what we receive, and sets us free from the selfish desire to possess. (YAS, C 16)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! Blessed Sister Maria Antonina experienced hunger, and yet she shared with other prisoners a portion of her daily bread. She was sensitive particularly to the needs of poor children. Grant us the grace that we understand those who ask us for a piece of bread. May our hearts be open to help another human being.

*Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
simple and poor in spirit and in life,
PRAY FOR US!*



DAY VII – 9 June
Sister Maria Antonina

OVERCOMING EVIL WITH TRUE LOVE

WORD OF GOD: This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. (Jn 15: 12-13)

OUR CONSTITUTION: As our intimate relationship with him deepens, he frees us to love more radically. Becoming more like Christ, we witness to his universal love for the church and his liberating covenant with humanity. (YAS, C 13)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! Blessed Sister Maria Antonina was convinced that enduring love has the power to heal. However, today continued hostility and violence are destroying families, cultures, and societies; the world is still torn and divided by injustice and racial, ethnic, and national conflicts. We ask you to grant us the courage to be witnesses of unity in a divided world and to make an effort towards reconciliation wherever we are.

***Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
overcoming evil with true love,
PRAY FOR US!***



DAY VIII – 10 June
Sister Maria Antonina

COURAGEOUS FOLLOWER OF JESUS

WORD OF GOD: “I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.” (Jn 16: 33)

OUR CONSTITUTION: As we live consecrated celibacy, Jesus teaches us the uncompromising demands of selfless love. We encounter acceptance and opposition; we experience joy and fulfillment, loneliness and pain. (YAS, C 14)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! Blessed Sister Maria Antonina as a School Sister of Notre Dame, courageously imitated you, sharing her love, faith, and hope with others. Grant us the grace of fervent love, deep faith, and unwavering hope that we are able to show you to the world.

*Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
courageous follower of Jesus,
PRAY FOR US!*



DAY IX – 11 June
Sister Maria Antonina

**MODEL OF PERMANENT
UNION WITH THE FATHER**

WORD OF GOD: Jesus ... said to him, "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." (Jn 14: 23)

OUR CONSTITUTION: Created for total union with God, we strive to become ever more united with him as we move into the future. (YAS, C 48)

LET US PRAY: Lord Jesus Christ! The foundation of the life of Blessed Sister Maria Antonina was her trust in the Father. Obedience to his will led her into the paschal mystery. We ask you to grant us the grace of entrustment, so that we are able to experience any difficulties with unwavering trust in you.

*Blessed Sister Maria Antonina,
model of permanent union
with the Father,
PRAY FOR US!*





BLESSED MARIA ANTONINA KRATOCHWIL
School Sister of Notre Dame (1881-1942)

A Patron of Shalom

Sister Maria Antonina Kratochwil was born August 21, 1881 in Witkowiec by Ostrawa where her parents moved in 1879 to find work. In 1885, they returned with their children to the mother's homeland Węgierska Górka and then settled down in Bielsko.

She entered the Congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in 1901. She worked as a teacher in SSND schools in Karwina (1906-1909; 1910-1917) and in Lwów (1917-1925); as local leader, boarding school directress, and mistress of candidates in Tłumacz (1925-1932); as principal of the school and mistress of the candidates in Lwów (1932-1939); and as local leader at Mikuliczyn (1940-1942).

During World War II, as a religious woman she was removed from school (the end of 1939); temporarily removed with her local community, the convent in Mikuliczyn (February 1940 – June 1941); and, on 9 July 1942, together with other sisters, she was arrested and put into prison in Stanisławów. There, in inhuman conditions (hunger, beating, torture, scoffing), she strengthened her sisters and lay co-prisoners by giving witness to Christian love, faith, and forgiveness. Five days after release from prison, on 2 October 1942, she died as a result of torture and typhus.

Sister Antonina was a woman of deep faith, a wise and competent teacher, and a wonderful person. Sisters and lay persons who worked with her unanimously testified that Sister Antonina possessed a boundless goodness and friendliness, a joyful love of her vocation. True serenity and peace emanated from her. She loved children, especially poor and neglected children. In suffering she had seen the grace to be like Christ.

Sister Maria Antonina Kratochwil was beatified in the group of 108 Martyrs of World War II (bishops, priests, religious and lay people) by Pope John Paul II in Warsaw, on 13 June 1999.

The liturgical calendar celebrates Sister Antonina's feast each year on 12 June.

