

PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

# The Complete Guide



The Daily Prayer, the Prayer of Pope Leo XIII, the Chaplet of the Nine Choirs of Angels, and the Nine-Day Novena — every prayer printed in full, ready to keep close at hand.

*“Who is like God?”*

*the meaning of the name Michael*

## 1 • Who Is Saint Michael the Archangel?



Saint Michael the Archangel is named three times in Scripture: in the Book of Daniel, where he appears as the great prince who stands guard over God's people; in the Letter of Jude, where he contends with the devil over the body of Moses; and in the Book of Revelation, where he leads the angels of heaven in battle against the dragon and casts him down. His name, Micha'el, is Hebrew for "Who is like God?" — traditionally understood as the cry Michael raised against the pride of Lucifer, who wished to be God's equal.

In Catholic devotion, Michael is honored as the leader of the heavenly armies, the guardian of the Church, and the angel who meets each soul at the hour of death to defend it in its final trial. He is invoked as a patron by soldiers, police officers, paramedics, and anyone who feels engaged in a struggle against evil, whether visible or unseen. Alongside Saint Gabriel and Saint Raphael, his feast is kept on September 29, a day traditionally called Michaelmas.

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## 2 • The Origins of This Devotion



Devotion to Saint Michael is ancient, but three moments shaped the prayers gathered in this guide.

### 1751 — The Chaplet

Michael appeared, according to long-standing tradition, to a Portuguese Carmelite, Antónia d'Astónaco, asking to be honored with nine salutations, one for each choir of angels. The devotion was formally approved and indulgenced by Pope Pius IX in 1851.

### 1886 — The Daily Prayer

Pope Leo XIII, after what witnesses described as a troubling vision during Mass, composed the short prayer that begins “Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle,” and ordered it recited after every Low Mass throughout the Church. He later wrote a longer prayer for use in the Roman Ritual's rite of exorcism.

### Today

Although the practice of reciting the prayer after Mass ended in the 1960s, Pope Saint John Paul II and later popes have repeatedly encouraged the faithful to return to it as a personal daily prayer, and it remains one of the most widely prayed devotions in the Church.

### 3 · The Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel



The Short Daily Prayer. This is the prayer most Catholics know by heart. Pope Leo XIII ordered it said after every Low Mass; today it is prayed after Mass in many parishes, and by individuals each morning, each night, or in any moment of temptation or fear.

#### **Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel**

*Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.*

When to pray it. This prayer fits naturally into a morning offering, a night prayer before sleep, or a quick petition before a difficult conversation, a hospital visit, or any moment that feels spiritually heavy. Many people also pray it slowly as an examination before Confession, asking Michael's help to see their own faults clearly.

The Complete Prayer of Pope Leo XIII. Few people realize the familiar short prayer is an excerpt. The original, composed for the Roman Ritual's exorcism rite, is longer and includes a psalm, a versicle dialogue, and a concluding collect. It is printed here in full for those who wish to pray it as Leo XIII intended.

# The Complete Prayer of Pope Leo XIII



*In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*

*Most glorious Prince of the Heavenly Armies, Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in our battle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of this world of darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places (Eph. 6:12).*

*Come to the assistance of men whom God has created to His likeness and whom He has redeemed at a great price from the tyranny of the devil. Holy Church venerates thee as her guardian and protector; to thee, the Lord has entrusted the souls of the redeemed to be led into heaven.*

*Pray therefore the God of Peace to crush Satan beneath our feet, that he may no longer retain men captive and do injury to the Church. Offer our prayers to the Most High, that without delay they may draw His mercy down upon us; take hold of the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bind him that he may no longer seduce the nations (Apoc. 20:2).*

*Psalm 67 — God arises; His enemies are scattered and those who hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so are they driven; as wax melts before the fire, so the wicked perish at the presence of God.*

*V. Behold the Cross of the Lord, flee bands of enemies.*

*R. He has conquered, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the offspring of David.*

*V. May Thy mercy, Lord, descend upon us.*

*R. As great as our hope in Thee.*

*V. O Lord, hear my prayer.*

*R. And let my cry come unto Thee.*

*V. May the Lord be with thee.*

*R. And with thy spirit.*

*Let us pray. God of heaven, God of earth, God of Angels, God of Archangels, God of Patriarchs, God of Prophets, God of Apostles, God of Martyrs, God of Confessors, God of Virgins, God who has power to give life after death and rest after work, because there is no other God than Thee and there can be no other, for Thou art the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, of whose reign there shall be no end, we humbly prostrate ourselves before Thy glorious Majesty and we beseech Thee to deliver us by Thy power from all the tyranny of the infernal spirits, from their snares, their lies, and their furious wickedness; deign, O Lord, to grant us Thy powerful protection and to keep us safe and sound. We beseech Thee through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

*From the snares of the devil, deliver us, O Lord. That Thy Church may serve Thee in peace and liberty, we beseech Thee to hear us. That Thou may crush down all enemies of Thy Church, we beseech Thee to hear us.*

## 4 • The Chaplet of Saint Michael the Archangel



Also called the Rosary of the Angels, the Chaplet of Saint Michael honors the Archangel together with the nine choirs of angels named in Scripture: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominations, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. Tradition holds that Michael promised whoever prays it faithfully an escort of nine angels, one from each choir, at the hour of Holy Communion, along with the protection of all the holy angels throughout life.

### How to pray it

- Begin with the Sign of the Cross and the opening versicle below.
- For each of the nine salutations, pray one Our Father and three Hail Marys.
- After the ninth salutation, pray one Our Father in honor of each of Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel, Saint Raphael, and your own Guardian Angel.
- Close with the two concluding prayers.

*A dedicated chaplet has nine groups of four beads, but the devotion can also be prayed on a rosary or simply counted on the fingers.*

### Opening

*O God, come to my assistance. O Lord, make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

## The Nine Salutations



1

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Seraphim, may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

2

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Cherubim, may the Lord grant us the grace to leave the ways of sin and run in the paths of Christian perfection. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

3

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Thrones, may the Lord infuse into our hearts a true and sincere spirit of humility. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

4

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Dominations, may the Lord give us grace to govern our senses and overcome any unruly passions. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

5

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Virtues, may the Lord preserve us from evil and from falling into temptation. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

6

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Powers, may the Lord protect our souls against the snares and temptations of the devil. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

7

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Principalities, may God fill our souls with a true spirit of obedience. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

## 8

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Archangels, may the Lord give us perseverance in faith and in all good works, that we may attain the glory of Heaven. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

## 9

By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Angels, may the Lord grant us to be protected by them in this mortal life and conducted, in the life to come, to Heaven. Amen.

*One Our Father and three Hail Marys.*

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## Concluding Prayers



*Then pray one Our Father in honor of each of Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel, Saint Raphael, and your Guardian Angel.*

*O glorious Prince Saint Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King, and our admirable conductor, you who shine with excellence and superhuman virtue, deliver us from all evil, who turn to you with confidence, and enable us by your gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day.*

*Pray for us, O glorious Saint Michael, Prince of the Church of Jesus Christ, that we may be made worthy of His promises.*

*Almighty and Everlasting God, Who, by a prodigy of goodness and a merciful desire for the salvation of all men, has appointed the most glorious Archangel Saint Michael Prince of Your Church, make us worthy, we ask You, to be delivered from all our enemies, that none of them may harass us at the hour of death, but that we may be conducted by him into Your presence. This we ask through the merits of Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

## 5 • The Nine-Day Novena to Saint Michael



A novena — from the Latin novem, nine — is nine consecutive days of prayer for a particular intention, a pattern rooted in the nine days the apostles and Our Lady spent in prayer between the Ascension and Pentecost. The Novena to Saint Michael is customarily begun on September 20, so that it concludes on his feast day, September 29, but it may be prayed at any time — before a difficult decision, during a season of temptation, for a loved one in danger, or simply as a nine-day school of confidence in Michael's protection.

Pray the same sequence below on each of the nine days, naming your intention silently or aloud at the point indicated. If you are able, set aside a fixed time each day — morning, evening, or before an image of Saint Michael — so the novena becomes a steady daily rhythm rather than nine separate, unconnected prayers.

### An Aspect of Saint Michael to Ponder Each Day

*This is not part of the novena's required text, only a suggestion for quiet reflection before you begin each day's prayer.*

| Day | Focus for Reflection                                                  |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Michael the Protector — guardian of God's people (Daniel 12:1)        |
| 2   | Michael the Warrior — leader of the heavenly armies (Revelation 12:7) |
| 3   | Michael, Vanquisher of Pride — “Who is like God?”                     |
| 4   | Michael, Defender of the Church — her guardian and protector          |
| 5   | Michael, Guide of Souls — present at the hour of death                |
| 6   | Michael and the Nine Choirs — humility before the angelic host        |
| 7   | Michael, Advocate in Trial — contending for what is right (Jude 1:9)  |
| 8   | Michael, Bringer of Courage — strength in fear or temptation          |
| 9   | Michael, Prince of the Church — gratitude and renewed trust           |

# The Novena Prayer

*Pray Daily for Nine Days*



## Opening

*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*O glorious Prince, Saint Michael the Archangel, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King, and our admirable protector, you who shine with excellence and superhuman virtue, deliver us from all evil. We turn to you with confidence, and we ask that through your gracious protection we may serve God ever more faithfully each day.*

*Pray for us, O glorious Saint Michael, Prince of the Church of Jesus Christ, that we may be made worthy of His promises.*

*— Here, name your intention for this novena —*

*Almighty and Everlasting God, Who, by a wondrous act of goodness and in Your merciful desire for the salvation of all people, appointed the most glorious Archangel Saint Michael as Prince of Your Church, grant, we pray, that we may be delivered from all our enemies, that none of them may trouble us at the hour of our death, but that Saint Michael may lead us safely into Your presence. We ask this through the merits of Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

## Prayer to Saint Michael

*Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.*

*Conclude with one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory Be.*

## 6 • Quick Reference: Which Prayer, and When



| Prayer                      | Length                      | Best Used For                                                                              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Short Daily Prayer          | About 30 seconds            | A quick morning, evening, or in-the-moment petition for protection.                        |
| Complete Prayer of Leo XIII | 3–4 minutes                 | Slow, deliberate prayer in a moment of real spiritual struggle.                            |
| The Chaplet                 | 10–15 minutes               | A daily devotion honoring Michael and the nine choirs of angels; often prayed on Tuesdays. |
| The Novena                  | 9 days, a few minutes daily | A sustained nine-day petition, especially before the feast on September 29.                |

*Praying the short daily prayer needs no special occasion; the Chaplet and Novena are traditionally prayed with more deliberate intention, but any of the four may be prayed as often as you find helpful.*

## 7 • Frequently Asked Questions



### 1. When is the feast day of Saint Michael?

September 29, shared with Saint Gabriel and Saint Raphael, and known traditionally as Michaelmas.

### 2. Do I need a special chaplet to pray the Chaplet of Saint Michael?

No. A dedicated chaplet of nine groups of four beads is traditional, but the devotion can be prayed on an ordinary rosary or counted on your fingers.

### 3. Can the Novena be prayed for someone else?

Yes. Novenas are commonly offered for the protection, healing, or conversion of another person; simply name that intention at the point indicated in the novena prayer.

### 4. What is the difference between the short prayer and the Prayer of Leo XIII?

The short prayer, “Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle...”, is in fact an excerpt from the longer prayer Leo XIII wrote for the Roman Ritual's exorcism rite. Both are printed in this guide.

### 5. Is it necessary to complete the Novena on nine consecutive days?

The traditional form is nine unbroken days, but if a day is missed, the common pastoral guidance is simply to continue rather than start over; the sincerity of the prayer matters more than mechanical precision.

### 6. Why nine choirs of angels in the Chaplet?

Scripture and long theological reflection distinguish nine orders of angels: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominations, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. The Chaplet honors Michael together with each of these nine choirs in turn.

### 7. Is this devotion only for times of danger?

No. While many people turn to Saint Michael in moments of fear or temptation, these prayers are also prayed simply out of ordinary, daily trust — much as one might ask any friend for help before a demanding day.



*Saint Michael the Archangel, pray for us.*