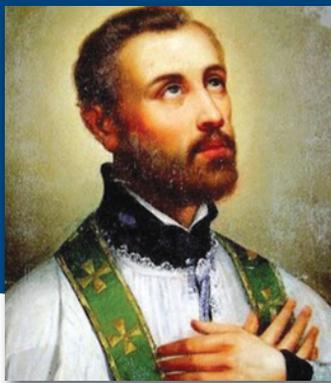


# Novena of Grace Day 1



O most kind and loving Saint Francis Xavier, in union with you I adore the most divine majesty. The memory of the favors with which God blessed you during life, and of your glory after death, fills me with joy. And I unite with you in offering to him my humble tribute of thanksgiving and praise. I implore of you to secure for me, through your powerful intercession, the all-important blessing of living and dying in a state of grace. I also ask you to obtain the favor I ask in this novena. (*Mention your petitions.*) But if what I ask is not for the greater glory of God, or the good of my soul, obtain for me what is most conducive to both. Amen.

**Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory Be.**

**V.** Pray for us, Saint Francis Xavier **R.** That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

O God, who was pleased to gather to your Church the peoples of the East by the preaching and miracles of Saint Francis Xavier, mercifully grant that we, who honour his glorious merits, may also imitate the example of his virtues, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Reflections from Jesuits who share the name Francis

While not a remarkable name among Irish Catholics, Francis Xavier is a name that always intrigued me, even as a little kid. And a name I've always liked a great deal. With the exception of a few years in high school (when the Jesuits presumed I was "Frank"), I've always been known as "Francis", or "Fran" among my family. My father on occasion would call me "Xave". Only about ten years ago did I discover the reason I was christened with that name. The eldest of my father's brothers told me that it wasn't that my father had a devotion to the saint, nor was it because I had been baptized by a Jesuit Navy chaplain during the Korean War, but rather that my father said to him, when they were sophomores in high school during 1936 that 'if I ever have a son, I'm going to call him Francis Xavier.' He just liked the sound of the name.

My own personal contact with St. Xavier is a little more exceptional. While I was studying theology in Ireland in 1982, the 150th anniversary of Catholic Emancipation was observed, and with it the 150th year since the beginning of the Jesuit Church in central Dublin, known as the Gardiner

Street Church, but actually under the patronage of St. Xavier. To mark this event, the parish authorities arranged with the Jesuits in Rome to bring the relic of the arm of St. Xavier to be venerated in the Church. The lines of people coming to pray before the relic stretched through the church and out into the busy street. The relic had to be guarded 24 hours a day. During the hours of veneration in the church this was easily accomplished not so much at night. The parish priest asked us Jesuit theologians, who lived around the corner in a small flat, to 'host The Arm' at night. So, for a week, the relic of The Arm was enshrined in the only armchair we had, in the dining room/kitchen/recreation room of our apartment. It was a bit disconcerting during mealtimes since the relic is St. Xavier's right hand and arm, seen through glass and it shared a place just away from the table. During that week it happened more than once that the doorbell would ring late at night with one of the locals saying, "Gese, Fada, would ja ever give us a rub of da relic?" How could you not oblige?

*Fr. Francis X. Ryan, SJ*