

17. May 2024

**Pentecost Novena**  
**Day 8: “The Keeper of our Souls”**

Once we have opened the doors for the Holy Spirit to unfold His gifts in us, we will come to know Him as the "Keeper of our souls". We could also call Him the "keeper of the treasure", because our soul is indeed the great treasure that our Father has entrusted to us, that the Lamb of God has bought with His blood to free it from captivity (1 Pet 1:18-19), and that the Holy Spirit with great power wants to enlighten and make flourish.

It would not be so difficult for our Divine Keeper to lead us to the completion of our earthly pilgrimage if we were like clay in the hands of our Heavenly Father and allowed ourselves to be moulded docilely by divine love (cf. Jer 18:6). Let us think, for example, of the swiftness of the holy angels. They hurry to carry out even the smallest of God's instructions, and no obstacle can stop them. Let us also think of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who willingly placed herself at the service of the Lord and always remained faithful to Him.

Of course, we are not angels, nor are we the Virgin Mary. But are we not also called to give ourselves completely to God's love and to follow Him willingly wherever He leads us, as Mary did?

Let us ask the Holy Spirit: What would He say to us? Surely He would praise our Father and describe to us the beauty with which He clothed our soul when He called it to life, the joy He took in our creation, the promises He has in store for our soul and the dignity He has bestowed upon it. Our Divine Keeper would never tire of singing the praises of God and would endlessly extol the Holy One, as would His friends, the holy seraphim.

He would probably go on to sing a song of rejoicing at our redemption, and would not cease to point out the love and wisdom of the Heavenly Father in all their beauty.

Then He would probably look at us to see if we have understood Him and if we are now able to join wholeheartedly in the praise of the infinitely loving God. His loving

gaze would rest on us and whisper to us: "You must respond to this beauty and grace that is being offered to you. I will watch over you and help you in all things".

But, alas, how often and to what extent our soul goes astray and does not seek true nourishment in the green pastures of God! How easily does it allow itself to be influenced and seduced, to follow the wrong paths! How easily it loses sight of the essential and wastes its time on useless things! It is even worse when it falls into sin and does not get back up after the fall.

But it is also difficult for the soul to see how its faith is being questioned in today's world, and how it does not even feel safe in the Church.

The "Keeper of our souls", who is also the "Keeper of the Church", has all this in view. Although He never resorts to violence, He does everything possible to prevent the soul from going astray. In the Acts of the Apostles, for example, we are told that the Holy Spirit prevented the Apostles from reaching their destination because Divine Providence had other plans (Acts 16:6-7).

In the same way, the Holy Spirit intervenes when we are in danger of choosing the wrong path. His admonishing voice will speak to us inwardly and sometimes prevent us from taking a wrong course.

Our divine Keeper "*will neither slumber nor sleep*" (Ps 121:4), and His loving gaze watches over us unceasingly. Not even the most subtle movements of our soul, which must appear before the Tribunal of Love, escape Him. The Holy Spirit is not satisfied that we avoid the most serious offences against love. That is not the ultimate goal! He sees to it that we are completely united to the will of God, that we glorify the Father and reach our goal.

In this way, the Holy Spirit helps us not to stray by assisting us and, with our cooperation, removing the obstacles that stand in our way, so that we may fulfil the plan for which God created us and thus live up to our vocation. If we allow Him to take the reins of our lives, He will penetrate every part of our being with precise knowledge, separating the light from the darkness.

In a special way, the Holy Spirit will watch over our spiritual life so that it does not weaken, and will warn us not to neglect prayer and other spiritual practices.

If we pay close attention to the Keeper of our souls, He will guide us safely through the times, especially when, as is the case today, the powers hostile to God increasingly ally themselves "*against the Lord and His anointed*" (Ps 2:2).