

Novena

in preparation for the feast
of St. Francis
of Assisi

September 25

to

October 3





Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi

September 25 – To Pray for the Grace of Conformity with Jesus Christ:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.¹

**ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.**

Leader: Praised be you, my Lord, with all Your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day and through whom You give us light.

**ALL: And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor;
and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.²**

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.³

Reader 1: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him” *(Jn 14:6-7)*

ALL: ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the Earlier Rule of St. Francis: (22:25-27,41)

Let us be very much on our guard that, under the guise of some reward or assistance, we do not lose or take our mind away from God. But, in the holy love which is God, I beg all my brothers [and sisters], both the ministers and the others, after overcoming every impediment and putting aside every care and anxiety, to serve, love, honor and adore the Lord God with a clean heart and a pure mind in whatever way they are best able to do so, for that is what He wants above all else. Let us always make a home and a dwelling place there for Him Who is the Lord God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. ... Let us, therefore, hold onto the words, the life, the teaching and the Holy Gospel of Him Who humbled Himself to beg His Father for us and to make His name known.

The end of the reading.

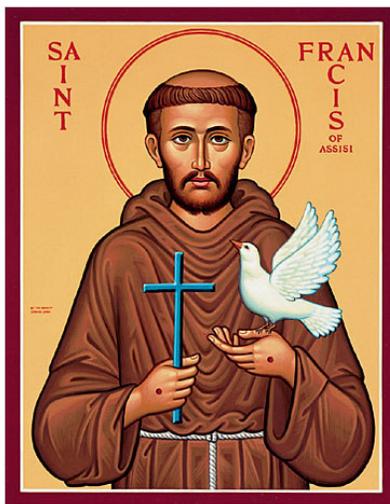
ALL: Thanks be to God!

Leader: Let us pray.
Most high, glorious God,⁴
we give you all thanks and all praise
for you give us life, love, and light in Jesus Christ.

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
let us desire nothing else, let us want nothing else,
let nothing else please us and cause us delight⁵
except your Son Jesus Christ,
our center, our inspiration, and our cornerstone,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Novena

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September 26 – To Pray for the Grace of Humility in Life and Service:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.

**ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.**

Leader: Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars;

ALL: in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.⁶

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.

Reader 1: “Whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many” *(Mt 20:26-28)*.

ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the 17th and 19th Admonitions of St. Francis:

Blessed is that servant who no more exalts himself over the good the Lord says or does through him than over what He says or does through another.

A person sins who wishes more from his neighbor than what he wishes to give of himself to the Lord God.

Blessed is that servant who does not consider himself any better when he is praised and exalted by people than when he is considered worthless, simple, and looked down upon, for what a person is before God, that he is and no more.

Woe to that religious who has been placed in a high position by others and who does not want to come down by his own will.

Blessed is that servant who is not placed in a high position by his own will and always desires to be under the feet of others.

The end of the reading.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Leader: Let us pray.

Most high, glorious God,

we give you all thanks and all praise

for the grace to reflect, like the moon, the light of Christ Jesus.

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
help us to teach, learn, retain, remember, and put into practice,
to love, keep, and treasure greatly⁷ all that Jesus is and does
so that, as his servants, we may give our lives in humble service
to the members of the Church, the Body of Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Novena

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September 27 – To Pray for the Grace of Peace:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.

**ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.**

Leader: Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,
ALL: through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.⁸

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.

Reader 1: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid” *(Jn 14:27).*

ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the 13th and 15th Admonitions of St. Francis:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

A servant of God cannot know how much patience and humility he has within himself as long as he is content. When the time comes, however, when those who should make him content do the opposite, he has as much patience and humility as he had at that time and no more. ... [Moreover,] those people are truly peacemakers who, regardless of what they suffer in this world, preserve peace of spirit and body out of love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The end of the reading.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Leader: Let us pray.

Most high, glorious God,
we give you all thanks and all praise
for you give us the gift of peace, like a gentle breeze, through Jesus Christ.

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
let us seek peace and follow after it,⁹
have justice and peace embrace¹⁰ in the depths of our hearts,
make ourselves instruments of peace in our world,
announce peace, and bear the good news¹¹ of your Son Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi

September 28 – To Pray for the Grace of Poverty and Chastity:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.

**ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.**

Leader: Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Water,

ALL: who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.¹²

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.

Reader 1: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroy, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be. ... Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things will be given you besides” *(Mt 6:19-21,33)*.

ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the 14th and the 16th Admonitions of St. Francis:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. There are many who, while insisting on prayers and obligations, inflict many abstinences and punishments upon their bodies. But they are immediately offended and disturbed about a single word which seems to be harmful to their bodies or about something which might be taken away from them. These people are not poor in spirit, for someone who is truly poor in spirit hates himself and loves those who strike him on the cheek. ... Blessed are the clean of heart for they will see God. The truly clean of heart are those who look down upon earthly things, seek those of heaven, and, with a clean heart and spirit, never cease adoring and seeing the Lord God living and true. The end of the reading.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Leader: Let us pray.

Most high, glorious God,
we give you all thanks and all praise
for your Son Jesus Christ made himself poor that we might be rich.

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
give us the unquenchable thirst**

to seek the inexhaustible treasures of your kingdom,¹³

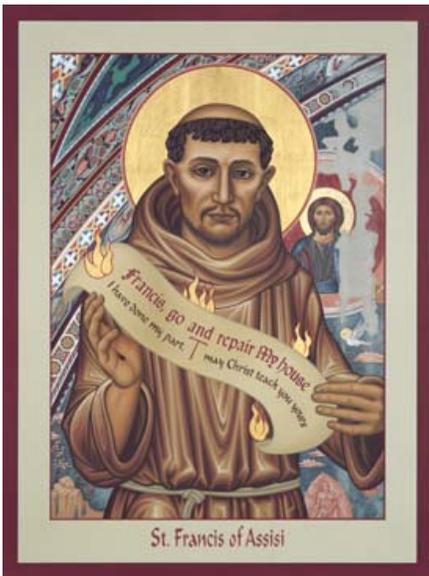
to choose poverty in the world beyond all else¹⁴

to adore you with a pure heart and a pure mind,¹⁵

**and thereby to conform ourselves to your Son Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi

September 29 – To Pray for the Grace of Evangelization:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.

**ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.**

Leader: Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light up the night,

ALL: and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.¹⁶

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.

Reader 1: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature” (Mk 16:15).

ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the Earlier Rule of St. Francis: (16:5-7)

As for the brothers who go, they can live spiritually among the Saracens and nonbelievers in two ways. One way is not to engage in arguments or disputes but to be subject to every human creature for God’s sake and to acknowledge that they are Christians. The other way is to announce the Word of God, when they see it pleases the Lord, in order that [unbelievers] may believe in almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Creator of all, the Son, the Redeemer and Savior, and be baptized and become Christians because no one can enter the kingdom of God without being reborn of water and the Holy Spirit.

The end of the reading.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Leader: Let us pray.

Most high, glorious God,
we give you all thanks and all praise
for you give us the fire and the passion
to bring the glad tiding and announce the salvation¹⁷ of Jesus Christ.

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
let us be joyful messengers of the Gospel.**

**May our light shine before others
that they may see goodness in our acts and glorify you.¹⁸**

**May we make the announcement by our lives, deeds, and words
that the kingdom of heaven is at hand.¹⁹**

**In all things may we make known your Son Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Novena

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September 30 – To Pray for the Grace of Oneness in Community:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.

**ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.**

Leader: Praised be you, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us,

ALL: and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.²⁰

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.

Reader 1: "I pray ... that they may all be one, as you Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, ... that they may be one as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me" *(Jn 17:20,21,22-23)*.

ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the Later Rule of St. Francis: *(6:7-9)*

Wherever the brothers may be and meet one another, let them show that they are members of the same family. Let each one confidently make known his need to the other, for if a mother loves and cares for her son according to the flesh, how much more diligently must someone love and care for his brother according to the Spirit! When any brother falls sick, the other brothers must serve him as they would wish to be served themselves.

The end of the reading. ALL: Thanks be to God!

Leader: Let us pray.

Most high, glorious God,
we give you all thanks and all praise
for you give us the gift of your Son through Jesus Christ
who is present among us when we gather together in his name,²¹
who sent out the apostles two by two to proclaim the Good News,²²
and who wills us to be one to show your love, to reveal your glory,
and to witness to Christ's own mission.²³

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
let us show that we are members of the same family,²⁴
showing our unity through our diversity and differences.**

**May nothing hinder us, nothing separate us, nothing come between us²⁵
as brothers and sisters.**

May we express our love for one another by our deeds²⁶

**and be meek, peaceful, modest, gentle, humble, and courteous²⁷ with one another
so as to reveal the presence and the saving work of your Son Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi

October 1 – To Pray for the Grace of Love and Reconciliation:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.

**ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.**

Leader: Praised be you, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.

**ALL: Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.²⁸**

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.

Reader 1: “As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. This I command you: love one another” (*Jn 15: 9-10,17*).

ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the Ninth, 18th, 24th, and 25th Admonitions of St. Francis:

The Lord says: “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who persecute and slander you.” For that person truly loves his enemy who is not hurt by an injury done to him, but, because of love of God, is stung by the sin of his soul. Let him show him love by his deeds. Blessed is the person who supports his neighbor in his weakness as he would want to be supported were he in a similar situation. Blessed is the servant who returns every good to the Lord God because whoever holds onto something for himself hides the money of his Lord God within himself, and what he thinks he has will be taken away from him. Blessed is the servant who loves his brother as much when he is sick and cannot repay him as when he is well and can repay him. Blessed is the servant who loves and respects his brother as much when he is far away from him as when he is with him, and who would not say anything behind his back that he would not say with charity in his presence. The end of the reading. **ALL: Thanks be to God!**

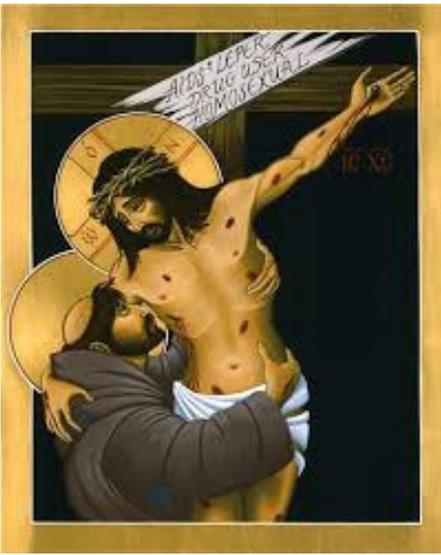
Leader: Let us pray.

Most high, glorious God, we give you all thanks and all praise
for through Jesus Christ you call us
to be co-lovers with you and ambassadors of reconciliation.²⁹

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
may we make known your love and bring about reconciliation with all our powers,
with every effort, every affection, every feeling, every desire and wish.³⁰
May we witness to the healing and saving love of your Son Jesus Christ
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi

October 2 – To Pray for the Grace of Conversion and Self-Emptying:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.

ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,

and no human is worthy to mention Your name.

Leader: Praised be you, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape.

ALL: Woe to those who die in mortal sin.

**Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.³¹**

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.

**Reader 1: “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat;
but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever
hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life” (Jn 12:24-25).**

ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the Seventh Admonition of St. Francis:

The apostle says: “The letter kills, but the spirit gives life.” Those people are put to death by the letter who only wish to know the words alone, that they might be esteemed wiser than others and be able to acquire great riches to give to their relatives and friends. And those religious are put to death by the letter who are not willing to follow the spirit of the divine letter but, instead, wish only to know the words and to interpret them for others. And those people are brought to life by the spirit of the divine letter who do not attribute every letter they know, or wish to know, to the body but, by word and example, return them to the most high Lord God to Whom every good belongs. The end of the reading. **ALL: Thanks be to God!**

Leader: Let us pray.

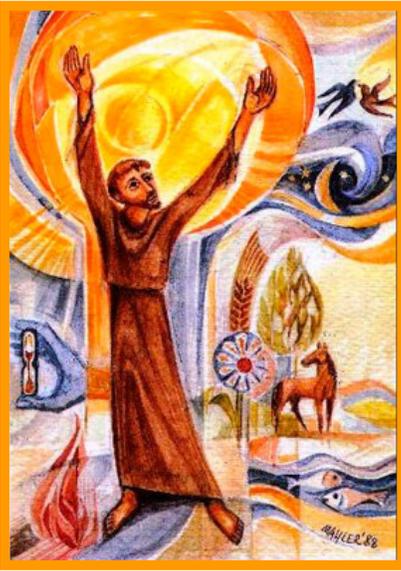
Most high, glorious God,
we give you all thanks and all praise
for you give us Jesus Christ as the means and the model for our holiness;
he emptied himself, coming in human likeness,
and he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even death on a cross.³²

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
May we turn our backs on our vices and sins and take up worthy fruits of penance³³
as we put aside all quarrelling, arguing, and judging others,³⁴
as we refrain from being angry or disturbed by the faults of others,³⁵ and
as we avoid all pride, vainglory, envy and greed, care and solicitude for the things of
this world, detraction, and murmuring.³⁶**

**Let us become one in thought, word, and deed with your Son Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi

**October 3 – To Pray for the Grace
of Entering into the Paschal Mystery:**

(The Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi

or, if the Transitus is not celebrated as the conclusion of the novena:)

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Leader: Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing.

**ALL: To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.**

Leader: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks

ALL: And serve Him with great humility.

**Reader 1: "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live,
and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die" (Jn 11:25-26).**

ALL: The Gospel of the Lord!

Reader 2: A reading from the earlier version of the Letter to All the Faithful (1-7):

**All those who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind,
with their whole strength and love their neighbors as themselves, who hate their
bodies with their vices and sins, who receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus
Christ, and who produce worthy fruits of penance:**

**O how happy and blessed are these men and women while they do such things and
persevere in doing them, because the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon them and
make Its home and dwelling place among them, and they are children of the
heavenly Father Whose works they do, and they are spouses, brothers, and mothers
of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

The end of the reading.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Leader: Let us pray.

Most high, glorious God,
we give you all thanks and all praise
for your Son Jesus Christ is our resurrection and our life.³⁷
In him we live and move and have our being.³⁸
He is the way, the truth, and the life,
and no one comes to you except through him.³⁹

**ALL: Through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi and after his example,
may we – who celebrate his passing from earthly existence to eternal life
and incorporate into our own lives the Passion and Death of your Son –
experience the joy, peace, newness, and eternal life of the Resurrection.
This we ask through the poor and crucified Jesus Christ who is our risen Lord
and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**

Amen.

Leader: Pray for us, holy father Francis,

ALL: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.

ENDNOTES:

¹ CtC [Canticle of the Creatures] 1-2 (*All quotes are taken from The Saint, Volume I of Francis of Assisi Early Documents, © 1999 Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, New York; edited by Regis J. Armstrong OFM^{Cap}, J.A. Wayne Hellman OFM^{Conv}, and William J. Short OFM*).

² CtC3-4.

³ CtC 14.

⁴ PrCr [Prayer before the Crucifix].

⁵ ER [Earlier Rule] 23:9.

⁶ CtC 5.

⁷ ER 23:2,3.

⁸ CtC 6.

⁹ Ps 34:15.

¹⁰ Ps 85:11.

¹¹ Is 52:7.

¹² CtC 7.

¹³ Lk 12:33.

¹⁴ 2LtF [Second or Later Letter to the Faithful] 5.

¹⁵ 2LtF 19.

¹⁶ CtC 8.

¹⁷ Is 52:7.

¹⁸ Mt 5:13.

¹⁹ Mt 10:7.

²⁰ CtC 9.

²¹ Mt 18:20.

²² Mk 6:7.

²³ Jn 17:20-26

²⁴ LR [Later Rule] 6:7.

²⁵ ER 23:10.

²⁶ ER 11:6.

²⁷ LR 3:11.

²⁸ CtC 10-11.

²⁹ 2 Cor 5:20.

³⁰ ER 23:8.

³¹ CtC 12-13.

³² Phil 2:7,8.

³³ 1LtF [First or Earlier Letter to the Faithful] 2,3.

³⁴ LR 3:10.

³⁵ LR 7:3.

³⁶ LR 10:7.

³⁷ Jn 11:25.

³⁸ Acts 17:28.

³⁹ Jn 14:6.