

SAINT CARLO ACUTIS

NOVENA



FEAST DAY 12 OCTOBER



DIOCESE OF
PALMERSTON
NORTH

Who was Carlo Acutis?

Carlo Acutis was born in London in 1991 and grew up in Milan. From childhood he had a deep love for Jesus in the Eucharist and for Our Lady, going to daily Mass and praying the Rosary every day from the age of seven. He was, by every account, a completely ordinary teenager: he played soccer, loved his Playstation, taught himself computer coding, and looked out for the friends around him.

At age eleven he began cataloguing Eucharistic Miracles from around the world into a website, wanting people to know that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. At fifteen he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of leukaemia and died within a week, on 12 October 2006, offering his suffering for the Pope and the Church. He was canonised by Pope Leo XIV on 7 September 2025.

Carlo showed us that holiness is possible for a young person today, in the ordinary circumstances of school, friendship and family. As his Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition and relics have visited our Diocese, we now turn to him in prayer, asking his intercession for our own families, parishes and young people, as we approach his Feast Day.

12 October is Saint Carlo Acutis's Feast Day, the anniversary of his death in 2006. This novena is prayed over the nine days beforehand, from Saturday 3 October to Sunday 11 October, so that the ninth day of prayer falls the day before the feast itself.

How to pray this novena

- Pray it on your own, with your family, or with your parish or school group.
- Each day has its own theme, drawn from Carlo's own words and the way he lived.
- Read the reflection, sit with the question for a moment, then pray the intention.
- Close each day with the prayer to Saint Carlo Acutis below.
- If you miss a day, simply pick it back up. What matters is returning to it.

Prayer to Saint Carlo Acutis

Saint Carlo Acutis, you loved Jesus with all your heart and found your greatest joy in the Eucharist. Help all your people in the Diocese of Palmerston North – especially the families and young people – to grow strong in faith and generous in love.

Through your intercession help us to recognise the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and make it the centre of our lives. Inspire us to seek holiness in the ordinary moments of each day, to serve others and to use our gifts to share the Gospel.

*Saint Carlo Acutis, pray for us that we may become Saints and lead others to Christ. **Amen.***

Day 1 3 October

Devotion to Mary

Saint Carlo Acutis said the Virgin Mother was the only woman in his life, and he never missed his daily appointment with her in the Rosary. He knew Mary not as a distant figure from history but as a real mother, present to him each day.

“The Virgin Mother is the only woman in my life... I never fail to keep the most gracious appointment of the day – recitation of the Holy Rosary.” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

Do I make time each day, as Carlo did, to talk with Mary as a real mother, rather than as a distant figure from history?

We Pray

For an increase of devotion to Our Lady across the Diocese of Palmerston North, that families and young people would turn to her as Mother and seek her intercession.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).

Day 2 4 October

Eucharistic Adoration

Carlo called the Eucharist his highway to Heaven. He understood, even as a teenager, that Christ is truly present, body, blood, soul and divinity, in the Blessed Sacrament, and he ordered his whole life around that truth, going to daily Mass and spending time before the tabernacle whenever he could.

“The Eucharist is my highway to Heaven.” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

When I am at Mass, am I truly present to Christ in the Eucharist, or has it become routine?

We Pray

For a deepening of Eucharistic faith and reverence in the parishes and Catholic schools of our Diocese, that all our people would come to recognise the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).

Day 3 5 October

The Rosary

Carlo called the Rosary the shortest ladder to Heaven. In its simple repetition he found no burden but a path, a way of walking through the life of Christ at Mary's side, every single day.

“The Rosary is the shortest ladder to Heaven.” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

Has the Rosary become a habit without heart for me? What would it take to pray it as a real conversation this week?

We Pray

For all who pray the Rosary across our Diocese, in homes, schools and parishes, that it would draw many more into deeper communion with Christ.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).

Carlo said that our goal must be infinite, not the finite, that the infinite is our true homeland, and that Heaven has been waiting for us forever. He lived with his eyes fixed on eternity, even while fully present to the ordinary joys of being young.

“Our goal must be infinite, not the finite. The infinite is our homeland. Heaven has been waiting for us forever.” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

What am I spending my time on that will not matter in eternity?

We Pray

For the young people of our Diocese who are discerning their vocation and the direction of their lives, that they would recognise what truly lasts and have the courage to choose it.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).

Carlo warned that everyone is born an original but many people end up dying as photocopies. He refused to let the pressure to fit in erase the person God made him to be, living his faith openly, without apology, in the ordinary settings of school and friendship.

“Everyone is born as an original, but many people end up dying as photocopies.” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

Where in my life am I living as a photocopy of others rather than the person God made me to be?

We Pray

For the youth of our Diocese, that they would have the courage to live as the disciples God is calling them to be, rather than copies of whatever the culture around them demands.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).

Carlo asked why people worry so much about the beauty of their own body and not about the beauty of their soul. In a world that measures a person's worth by appearance, achievement or usefulness, he saw clearly that every person's true worth comes from being made in the image of God.

“Why do people worry so much about the beauty of their own body and not about the beauty of their soul?” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

Whose dignity have I overlooked lately, whether in the womb, in illness, in age, or on the margins of my community?

We Pray

For a deeper respect for the dignity of every human life across our communities, from conception to natural death.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).

Carlo compared the soul to a hot air balloon, needing to shed the small weights of venial sin to rise, and falling to the ground under the weight of mortal sin. He said confession is like the fire that lifts the balloon again, and that because the soul is so complex, it is important to go often.

“In order to rise up high, a hot air balloon needs to shed weight, just like the soul, which, in order to raise itself up to Heaven, needs to remove those small weights, called venial sins... Confession is like the fire underneath the balloon enabling the soul to rise again... It is important to go to Confession often, because the soul is very complex.” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

How long has it been since my last confession, and what is holding me back from going?

We Pray

For all the priests of our Diocese who hear confessions, and for all our people to return often and without fear to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).

Carlo's whole life could be summed up in three words: not I, but God. He used his gifts, his friendships and even his love of computers not to draw attention to himself but to point others to Christ.

“Not I, but God.” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

Who in my life doesn't yet know Christ, and what is one way I could share Him this week, without fear of what others might think?

We Pray

For missionary zeal across our Diocese, that priests, parents, teachers and young people alike would find the courage to speak openly of Jesus to those who do not yet know Him.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).

Carlo said that always being united with Jesus was his programme of life, a constant companionship through his studies, friendships, daily life and suffering. As we come to the end of this novena, on the eve of his Feast Day, we ask for that same closeness to Jesus.

“Always to be united with Jesus, this is my programme of life.” Saint Carlo Acutis

Today's Question

Is being close to Jesus truly the plan of my life, or one part among many?

We Pray

For unity and renewal across the Diocese of Palmerston North, that our parishes, schools and families would grow in that same closeness to Jesus that shaped Carlo's short life so completely.

Close with the Saint Carlo Acutis Prayer (page 2).