

**P**ART **T**HREE

The **P**ROPER  
of the **S**AINTS





*Third Reading*      *A Homily on John's Report by St. John Chrysostom*

After Andrew had stayed with Jesus and learned a great deal from him, he did not keep this wealth to himself, but hurried to share it with his brother. Notice what Andrew told him: "We have discovered the Messiah (the Prince)." Notice how what he says reveals what he has learned in so short a time; it shows the power of the Master, who convinced the students of this truth. It reveals the zeal and concern of people preoccupied with this question from the very beginning.

Andrew's words reveal a soul waiting with the greatest of longing for the coming of the Prince, looking forward to his appearing from heaven, overjoyed when he does appear, and hurrying to announce this great event to others. To support each other in spiritual matters is the true sign of brotherly good will, loving kinship, and sincere affection.

Notice too, how, even from the beginning, the Rock is docile and receptive in spirit. He hurries over to Jesus, without delaying. "He brought him to Jesus," says the Evangelist. But the Rock is not to be condemned for his readiness to accept Andrew's word without much pondering upon it; it is probable that his brother had given him and many others a careful account of the event; the evangelists, in the interest of brevity, regularly summarize a lengthy narrative. St. John does not say that the Rock believed at once, but that "he brought him to Jesus." Andrew was to hand him over to Jesus, to learn everything for himself. There was also another student present, and he went quickly with them for the same purpose.

When John the Bather said, "This is the Lamb," and "He bathes people in the Holy Spirit," he left the deeper understanding of this to be received from the Prince. All the more would Andrew act in the same way, since he did not think he was able to give a complete explanation himself. He brought his brother to the very source of light, and the Rock was so full of joy and zeal that he would not delay, even for a moment.

As soon as Andrew heard the Master preaching, he left the nets which

were his livelihood and way of life and followed the Master who gives us eternal life.

This is the man who endured suffering for the love of the Prince and his law, and followed the Master who gives us eternal life.

#### Prayer

Master, please listen in your kindness to the requests we make; since you called the Emissary Andrew to deliver the proclamation of the Good News and guide your Church in faith, may he always be our friend in your presence to help us with his prayers. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit, through all the endless ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 “Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not think entering the Virgin’s womb offensive;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;

and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.



Born in Spain in 1506. Became a follower of St. Ignatius Loyola while studying at Paris. He went to the Orient in 1541 and for ten years proclaimed the Gospel in India and Japan. He died in 1552 near China.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter to St. Ignatius by St. Francis Xavier*

We have visited the villages of the new converts who accepted the Christian religion a few years ago. No Portugese live here, the country is so completely barren and poor. The Native Christians have no priests; they only know that they *are* Christians; there is no one to say Mass for them, no one to teach them the Creed, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Commandments of God's Law.

I have not stopped since the day I arrived. I conscientiously made the

rounds of the villages; I bathed in the sacred water all the children who had not yet had the Bath. This means that I have purified a huge number of children so young that, as the saying goes, they could not tell their right hand from their left. The older children would not let me say my Office or eat or sleep until I taught them one prayer or another. Then I began to understand, “the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those like this.”

I could not refuse so devout a request without failing in devotion myself. I taught them first the confession of faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; then the Creed of the Emissaries, the Our Father, and the Hail Mary. I noticed among them persons of great intelligence. If only someone could educate them in the Christian way of life, I have no doubt that they would make excellent Christians.

Many, many people around here are not becoming Christians for only one reason: there is no one to make them Christians. Again and again I have thought of going round the universities of Europe, especially Paris, and crying out everywhere like a madman, riveting the attention of those with more learning than charity: “What a tragedy! How many souls are being shut out of heaven and falling into hell, thanks to you!”

I wish they would work as hard at this as they do at their books, and so settle their account with God for their learning and the talents entrusted to them.

This thought would certainly stir most of them to meditate on spiritual realities, to listen actively to what God is saying to them. They would forget their own desires, their human affairs, and give themselves over entirely to God’s will and his choice. They could cry out with all their hearts, “Master, I am here. What do you want me to do?” Send me anywhere you like—even to India!”

The harvest is so large, and there are so few to reap it. Pray to the Master of the harvest to send workers into his harvest.

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will act as witnesses of me to the ends of the earth. Pray to the Master of the harvest to send workers into his harvest.

## December 4: John Damascene, Priest and Doctor

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since by the preaching of St. Francis Xavier you brought many nations to yourself, please give his zeal for the faith to everyone who believes in you, so that your Church will enjoy continued growth throughout the world. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in the Seventh Century. Learned in philosophy, he became a monk at St. Sabbas near Jerusalem and was then ordained a priest. He wrote many doctrinal works, especially against iconoclasts. Died in the middle of the eighth century.

### *Third Reading*

### *The Statement of Faith by John Damascene*

Master, you led me from my father's body and formed me from my mother's womb. You brought me, a naked baby, into the light of day, because nature's laws always obey your commands.

By the blessing of the Holy Spirit, you prepared my creation and existence, not because human beings chose it or matter desired it, but by your ineffable grace. The birth you prepared for me was of a kind that went beyond the laws of our nature; you brought me out into the light by adopting me as your son, and you enrolled me among the children of your holy and spotless Church.

You nursed me with the spiritual milk of your divine utterances; you kept me alive with the solid food of the body of Prince Jesus, the only Son you ever fathered and our God, and you let me drink from the cup containing his life-giving blood, which was poured out to save the whole world.

You loved us, Master, and you gave up the only Son you ever fathered for our redemption; and he undertook the task willingly, and did not try to avoid it. In fact, he devoted himself to it as though he had been destined for sacrifice, like an innocent lamb. Although he was God,

he became man, and in his human will became obedient to you, his Father God, “to death, even to death on a cross.”

You lowered yourself this far, Prince my God, so that you could carry this straying sheep on your shoulders. You let me graze in green pastures, and gave me the refreshment of the water of orthodox teaching at the hands of your shepherds. You fed these shepherds, and now in their turn they feed your chosen, special flock.

And now you have called me, Master, by the hand of your bishop, to serve your people. I do not know why you did this, because only you know that. Master, please lighten the heavy burden of the serious sins I have committed; purify my mind and heart; and like a shining lamp, lead me along the straight path. When I open my mouth, please tell me what I should say, and by the tongue of fire of your Spirit, make my own tongue ready. Please stay with me always and keep me in your sight.

Please lead me on to pastures, Master, and graze there with me. Do not let my heart be attracted to the right or the left, and have your good Spirit guide me along the straight path; and whatever I do, let it be in accordance with your will, from now on until the end.

And you, my Church, are a superb community, the noble summit of perfect purity, whose help comes from God. Since you are the one in whom God lives, receive from us an exposition of the faith that is free from error, to strengthen the Church, just as our Fathers handed it down to us.

True teaching was in his mouth, and no evil was ever on his lips; he walked with me in goodness and peace.

My hand will be a steady help to him; my arm will give him strength; he walked with me in goodness and peace.

#### Prayer

Master, may the prayers of St. John Damascene help us, and may the true faith he taught so well always be our light and our strength. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



December 6  
icholas  
 Bishop

Bishop of Myra in Lycia (Turkey), who died in the middle of the fourth century.

*Third Reading*

*A Treatise on John, by St. Augustine*

When the Master asks the Rock if he loves him, he is asking something he already knows; yet he does not ask only once, but a second and third time. Each time, the Rock's answer is the same: "You know I love you." Each time, the Master gives him the same command: "Feed my sheep."

The Rock had repudiated the Prince three times; and to counter this, he must profess his faith three times; otherwise, his tongue would seem quicker to serve fear than love, and the threat of death would seem to have made him more eloquent than the presence of life. If repudiating the shepherd was proof of fear, then the task of love is to tend his flock.

When those who are feeding the Prince's flock wish that the sheep were their own rather than his, they stand convicted of loving themselves, not the Prince. And the Master's words are a repeated warning to them and to everyone who, as Paul writes sadly, are looking to their own purposes, not the Prince's.

"Do you love me? Feed my sheep." Surely this means, "If you love me, your thoughts should be focused on taking care of my sheep, not taking care of yourself; you are to tend them as mine, not yours; try to enhance my reputation in them, not yours, to stress my sovereign rights, not yours, and my gain, not yours. Otherwise, you will find yourself among those who belong to the 'times of danger,' those who are guilty of self-love and the other sins that go with that source of evil."

So the shepherds of the Prince's flock must never indulge in self-love; if they do, they will be tending the sheep as their own, not the Prince's; and of all vices, this is the one that shepherds must guard against most carefully: looking to advance their own purposes and not the Prince's, and furthering their own desires through those persons for whom the Prince shed his blood.

The love of the Prince ought to reach such a spiritual pitch in his shepherds that it overcomes the natural fear of death, which makes us avoid the thought of dying, even though we desired to live with the Prince. However stressful death may be, the strength of love ought to overmaster the discomfort. I am referring to the love we have for the Prince who, even though he is our life, consented to suffer death for our sake.

Consider this: If death held little or no anguish for us, the glory of martyrdom would be less. But if the Good Shepherd, who gave up his life for his sheep, has made so many of those same sheep martyrs and witnesses for him, then how much more should the Prince's shepherds fight for the truth even to death and shed their blood in opposing sin? After all, the Master has entrusted them with tending his flock and teaching and guiding his lambs.

With his suffering as their example, the Prince's shepherds are most certainly bound to adhere to the pattern of his suffering, since even the lambs have so often followed that pattern of the chief shepherd in whose one flock the shepherds are lambs themselves. That is, the Good Shepherd who suffered for all mankind has made all mankind his lambs, since in order to suffer for them all, he made himself a lamb.

The Master gave him a high reputation in the sight of kings, and gave him commandments for his people. God revealed his glory to him.

The Master chose him to be his slave, a shepherd of his own Israel. God revealed his glory to him.

#### Prayer

Father, please listen to our prayers for mercy, and by the help of Saint Nicholas, keep us safe from all danger, and guide us in the way to our rescue. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

December 7  
**A**mbrose  
Bishop and Doctor

Born of a Roman family in Trier ca. 340. He studied at Rome, and was part of the imperial government at Sirmium. In 374, in Milan, he was elected bishop by popular acclaim, and ordained on December 7. He distinguished himself by service to the poor and as an effective pastor and teacher, defending the Church against the Arians. Died on Holy Saturday, April 4, 397.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Ambrose*

You have entered the position of bishop; you are sitting at the helm of the Church and piloting the ship against the waves. Take firm hold of the rudder of faith so that the severe storms of this world cannot disturb you; the sea is mighty and vast, but do not be afraid, because as Scripture says, "He has founded it upon the seas, and set it firm upon the water."

The Master's Church is built upon the rock of the Emissaries among so many dangers in the world; and that is why it remains unmoved. The Church's foundation is unshakable and firm against the assaults of the raging sea. Waves lash at the Church, but do not shatter it; although the elements of this world constantly beat upon the Church with a crash, the Church has the safest harbor of rescue for everyone in distress. Although the Church is tossed on the ocean, it rides easily on rivers, especially those rivers Scripture speaks of: "The rivers have raised their voices." These are the rivers flowing from the heart of the man who is given something to drink by the Prince, and who receives water from the Spirit of God. When these rivers overflow with the grace of the Spirit, they "raise their voices."

There is also a stream which flows down on God's saints like a waterfall; and there is a rushing river giving joy to the heart that is at peace, and which makes for peace. If anyone has received water from the overflow of this river, like John the Evangelist, or like the Rock and Paul, he "raises his voice." Just as the Emissaries raised their voices and reported the Good News throughout the world, those who drink this water begin to report the Good News about Master Jesus.

So then drink from the Prince, so that your voice will also be heard. Store up in your mind the water that is the Prince, the water that praises the Master. Store up water from many sources, the water that rains down from the clouds of prophecy.

Whoever collects water from the mountains and channels it toward himself or draws it from springs, is a source of dew himself, like the clouds. So fill your soul with this water, so that your land will not be dry, and will be watered with your own springs.

A person who reads a great deal and understands a great deal is receiving his fill; and one who is full gives refreshment to others. So Scripture says, "If the clouds are full, they will pour rain on the earth."

And so have your words be clean, transparent rivers, so that in your sermons you will charm the ears of your people, and by the grace of your words win them over to follow your leadership. Your sermons should be full of understanding. Solomon says, "The weapons of understanding are the lips of wise men," and in another place, "Your lips are to be bound with wisdom." That is, let the meaning of your words shine out, let understanding take flame. See that your addresses and lectures do not need to invoke the authority of others, and let your words be their own defense. No word is to escape your lips frivolously or be uttered without a depth of meaning.

Deliver the proclamation, at the right time and the wrong time; refute what is false, correct errors, and call people to obedience.

Can anyone have as much cause for pride as you have? You have anointed kings and champions of virtue. Refute what is false, correct errors, and call people to obedience.

#### Prayer

Master, since you made St. Ambrose an outstanding teacher of the Catholic faith and gave him the courage of an Emissary, please bring forward in your Church more leaders after your own heart to guide us with courage and wisdom. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

December 8



*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Anselm*

Blessed Lady, the sky and the stars, the earth and rivers, day and night—in fact, everything that is subject to human power and use—finds its happiness in the fact that through you they are in some sense restored to their lost beauty and are endowed with inexpressible new grace. All these creatures were dead, so to speak, and useless for human beings or for the praise of the God who made them. The world, in opposition to its true destiny, was corrupted and tainted by the acts of human beings who served idols. Now all creation has been restored to life and is overjoyed that it is controlled and given radiance by human beings who believe in God.

The universe is happy with its new and indefinable loveliness. Not only does it feel the unseen presence of God himself, its Creator; it sees him openly, working and making it holy. These great blessings arise from the remarkable yield of Mary's womb.

Through the abundance of grace that was given to you, what was dead finds joy in its freedom, and the beings in heaven are glad to be made new. Through the Son who was the glorious yield of your virgin womb, virtuous souls who died before his life-giving death are overjoyed as they are freed from captivity, and the angels are full of joy at the restoration of their shattered realm.

Lady, full and overflowing with grace, all creation is receiving new life from your abundance. Virgin blessed more than any creature, through the blessing you bestowed, all of creation is blessed; not only the creation that comes from the Creator, but even the Creator himself

has been blessed by his creation.

God gave the only Son he ever fathered to Mary, the one he loved as much as himself. Through Mary, God made himself a Son—not a different one, the same one—by nature Son of God and Son of Mary. The whole universe was created by God, and God was born from Mary. God created everything; and Mary gave birth to God. The God who made everything gave himself form through Mary, and in this way he made his own creation. The one who could create everything from nothing would not remake his ruined creation without Mary.

And so God is the Father of the created world, and Mary is the mother of the re-created world. God is the Father by whom everything was given life, and Mary the mother through whom everything was given new life. That is, God fathered the Son, through whom everything was made, and Mary gave birth to him as the Savior of the world. Without God's Son, nothing could exist; without Mary's Son, nothing could be redeemed.

The Master is certainly with you, the one to whom the Master granted that all of nature would owe as much to you as to himself.

Proclaim the Master's glory with me, because his merciful love for me is tremendous.

From this day on every generation will admire me, because his merciful love for me is tremendous.

#### Prayer

Father, since you prepared the Virgin Mary to be the fitting mother of your Son, by letting her share beforehand in the rescue the Prince would bring by his death and keeping her sinless from the first moment of her conception, please help us by her prayers to live in your presence without sin. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you

as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 “Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not think entering the Virgin’s womb offensive;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.



Cuahtlatzin (the talking eagle) was a member of the Chichimeca people in Mexico. He was a leader of his people and was involved in the textile industry. He received the vision of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and then lived as a hermit in a hut near the chapel on Tepeyac, where he cared for the church and the first pilgrims.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

“If anyone wants to come after me, he must reject himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” The Master’s command seems difficult and painful: that anyone who wants to follow him must reject himself. But his command is not really difficult or painful, since he helps us himself to do what he commands. That is, the verse of the psalm addressed to him was appropriate: “Because of the words that came from your lips I have remained on the hard roads.” His own words are also true: “My harness does not chafe, and my burden is light.” The reason is that love makes easy whatever is difficult in his commands.

What does it mean, “He is to take up his own cross”? It means he must endure a great many things that are painful; that is the way he must follow me. When he begins to follow me in my life and my teachings, many people will contradict him and try to stop or dissuade him, even those who call themselves the Prince’s students. It was those who walked along with the Prince who tried to stop the blind men from calling to him. So if you want to follow the Prince, you will take these threats or flattery or any kind of obstacle and fashion them into the cross; you must endure it, carry it, and not give way under it. And so in this world that is the Church, a world of those who are good, conformed, and saved—or rather those destined for salvation, but already saved by hope, as it is written, “We are saved by hope”—in this world of the Church, which completely follows the Prince, he has said to everyone, “If anyone wants to follow me, he is to reject himself.”

This is not a command for virgins to obey and brides to ignore, one for widows and not married women, for monks and not married men, or for the clergy and not the laity. No, the whole Church, the entire body,



all the members in their distinct functions, must follow the Prince. The one who is totally unique, the dove, the wife who was redeemed and dowered by the blood of her bridegroom, is to follow him. There is a place in the Church for the chastity of virgins, for the continence of widows, and for the modesty of those who are married. All her members, in fact, have their place, and this is where they are to follow the Prince, in their function and their way of life. They must reject themselves; that is, they must not presume on their own strength. They must take up their cross by enduring in the world for the Prince's sake whatever pain the world brings.

They should love the one who is the only one who can neither deceive nor be deceived, the one who alone will not fail them. They are to love him because his promises are true. Faith sometimes falters because he does not reward us immediately; but hold out, be steadfast, persevere, put up with the delay, and you have carried the cross.

This holy man performed miracles in the sight of God; he praised the Master with his whole heart. May he intercede for all mankind.

He was a man without bitterness, with a life that was a living praise to God; he avoided every evil deed and kept himself sinless to the end. May he intercede for all mankind.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Master, since you made known through saint Juan Diego the love of Our Lady of Guadalupe toward your people, please grant through his intercession to those of us who follow the advice of our mother Mary the blessing of constantly exerting ourselves to do your will. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

December 11



Pope

Born in Spain ca. 305. Admitted to the Roman clergy and in 366, during an upheaval in the Church, ordained bishop of Rome. He summoned synods to work against schismatics and heretics and promoted the cult of martyrs, adorning their graves with sacred verse. He died in 384.

*Third Reading**A Treatise against Faustus, by St. Augustine*

As the Christian community, we assemble to celebrate the memory of martyrs with solemn ritual, because we want to be inspired to follow their example, share in their merits, and be helped by their prayers. And yet, we do not erect any altars to the martyrs, even in the martyr's burial chapels.

No bishop in celebrating at an altar where these holy bodies rest, has ever said, "Simon Rock, we make this offering to you," or "Paul, we make it to you," or "to you, Cyprian." No, what is offered is always offered to God, who crowned the martyrs. We make these offerings in the chapels where the bodies of those he crowned rest, so that the memories that still cling to those places will arouse our emotions and encourage us to greater love both for the martyrs whom we can imitate, and for God whose grace enables us to do so.

So we show respect to the martyrs with the same reverence of love and friendship that we give to the holy men of God who are still with us. We sense that the hearts of these people are just as ready to suffer death for the sake of the Good News; and we feel even more devoted to those who have already come victoriously through the struggle. We honor those who are fighting on the battlefield of this life here below, but we have more confidence in our honoring those who have already achieved the victor's laurel crown and live in heaven.

But the respect that is strictly called "worship" or *latria*, that is, the special homage that belongs only to the Divinity, is something we give and teach others to give only to God. The offering of a sacrifice belongs

to worship in this sense, and that is why those who sacrifice to idols are called idol-worshippers, and we do not make or tell others to make any such offering to any martyr, any holy soul, or any angel. If someone among us falls into this error, he is corrected with words of healthy teaching, and must either mend his ways or be avoided.

Even the saints forbid anyone to offer the worship they know is reserved for God, as is clear from the case of Paul and Barnabas. When the Lycaonians were so amazed by their miracles that they wanted to sacrifice to them as gods, the Emissaries tore their clothes, declared that they were not gods, urged the people to believe them, and forbade them to worship them.

Yet the truths we teach are one thing, and the abuses thrust upon us something else. There are commandments that we are bound to give; there are breaches of them that we are bound to correct; but until we correct them, we must of necessity put up with them.

The death of his faithful people is of great value in the Master's eyes; their very bones are dear to him, and not one of them will be broken.

The Master dresses them in happiness. Their very bones are dear to him, and no one of them will be broken.

Prayer

Father, since St. Damasus loved and honored your martyrs, may we continue in the same way to celebrate their witness for the Prince, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit through all the ages of ages. Amen.

December 12  
OUR Lady  
of Guadalupe

On December 9, 1531, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Juan Diego at Tepeyac and left him a picture of herself imprinted on his cloak. Devotion to Mary under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe has increased, and today she is the Patroness of the Americas.

*Third Reading**A Report by Don Antonio Valeriano,  
an Indian of the sixteenth century*

At daybreak one Saturday morning in 1531, on the very first days of the month of December, an Indian named Juan Diego was going from the village where he lived in Tlatelolco to take part in divine worship and listen to God's commandments. When he came near the hill called Tepeyac, dawn had already come, and Juan Diego heard someone calling him from the very top of the hill: "Juanito, Juan Dieguito."

He went up the hill and caught sight of a lady of unearthly grandeur whose clothing was as radiant as the sun. She said to him in words both gentle and courteous, "Juanito, the most insignificant of my children, know and understand that I am the ever-virgin Mary, Mother of the true God through whom everything lives. It is my ardent desire that a church be erected here so that in it I can show and bestow my love, kindness, help, and protection to everyone who inhabits this land, and to those who love me, so that he will be able to call upon and confide in me. Go to the Bishop of Mexico and make known to him what I greatly desire. Go and put all your effort into this."

When Juan Diego arrived in the presence of the Bishop, Fray Juan de Zimarrage, a Franciscan, the latter did not seem to believe Juan Diego and answered, "Come another time, and I will listen at leisure."

Juan Diego returned to the hilltop where the Heavenly Lady was waiting, and said to her, "My Lady, my maiden, I presented your message to the Bishop, but it seemed to me that he did not think that it was true. For this reason I beg you to entrust your message to someone more important to convey it, so that they will believe it, because I am only an insignificant man."

She answered, "Most insignificant of my sons, I ask that tomorrow you go again to see the Bishop and tell him that I, the ever-virgin holy Mary, Mother of God, am the one who personally sent you."

But on the following day, Sunday, the Bishop again did not believe Juan Diego, and told him that some sign was necessary so that he could believe that it was the Heavenly Lady herself who sent him. And then he dismissed Juan Diego.

On Monday, Juan Diego did not return. His uncle, Juan Bernardino, became very ill, and at night asked Juan to go to Tlatelolco at daybreak to call a priest to hear his confession.

Juan Diego set out on Tuesday, but he went around the hill and passed on the other side, toward the east, so as to arrive quickly in Mexico City and to avoid being detained by the Heavenly Lady. But she came out to meet him on that side of the hill and said to him, “Listen and understand, my most insignificant son. There is nothing to frighten and distress you. Do not let your heart be troubled, and let nothing upset you. Is it not I, your Mother, who is here? Are you not under my protection? Are you not, fortunately, in my care? Do not let your uncle’s illness distress you. It is certain that he has already been cured. Go up to the hilltop, my son, where you will find flowers of various kinds. Cut them, and bring them into my presence.”

When Juan Diego reached the summit, he was astonished that so many Castilian roses had burst forth at a time when the frost was severe. He carried the roses in the folds of his *tilma* (mantle) to the Heavenly Lady. She said to him, “My son, this is the proof and the sign which you will bring to the Bishop so that he will see my will in it. You are my ambassador, very worthy of trust.”

Juan Diego set out on his way, now content and sure of succeeding. On arriving in the Bishop’s presence, he told him, “My lord, I did what you asked. The Heavenly Lady complied with your request and fulfilled it. She sent me to the hilltop to cut some Castilian roses and told me to bring them to you in person. This is what I am doing, so that you can see in them the sign you are looking for in order to carry out her will. Here they are. Please accept them.”

He immediately opened up his white mantle, and as all the different Castilian roses scattered to the ground, there was drawn on the cloak and suddenly appeared the precious image of the ever-virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the same manner as it is today and is kept in her shrine of Tepeyac.

The whole city was moved and came to see and admire her venerable image and to offer prayers to her; and follow the command which the same Heavenly Lady gave to Juan Bernardino when she restored him to health, they called her by the name that she herself had used: “the ever-virgin holy Mary of Guadalupe.”

You are to love the Master, your God, with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the

second is like it: you are to love your neighbor as much as you love yourself. You are to love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.

Whatever you do for the most insignificant of my brothers or sisters, you are doing for me. You are to love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.

#### Prayer

Dear God of power and mercy, since you blessed the Americas at Tepeyac with the presence of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe, may her prayers please help every human being to accept all others as brothers and sisters, and through your virtue present in our hearts may your peace reign in the world. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Died at Syracuse, probably during the persecution of Diocletian (around 300). She was honored from antiquity.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *On Virginity by St. Ambrose*

You are one of God's people, of God's family, a virgin among virgins; you shine the splendor of your soul upon the grace of your body. More than others, you can be compared to the Church; and so when you are in your room at night, always think of the Prince, and wait for his coming at every moment.

This is the person the Prince has loved in loving you, the person he has chosen in choosing you. He comes in by an open door; he has promised to come in, and he cannot deceive anyone. Embrace him, since he is the one you were searching for; turn to him and be filled with light; hold him fast, and ask him not to hurry away; beg him not to leave you. The Word of God moves quickly; he is not won by lukewarm people, or held fast by neglectful ones. Your soul should be attentive to what he

says, and follow carefully the path God tells you to take, because he passes by swiftly.

What does his bride say? “I was searching for him and did not find him. I called him, and he did not hear me.” Do not imagine that you are displeasing to him, even though you have called him, asked him, and opened the door for him; and that this is the reason he has gone so quickly. No, he arranges for us to be constantly tested. When the crowds were pressing him to stay, what did he say in the report of the Good News? “I must deliver the proclamation of God to other cities, because that is what I have been sent for.” But even if it seems to you that he has left you, go out and search for him once more.

Who but the holy Church is to teach you how to hold fast to the Prince? In fact, she has already taught you, if you only could have understood what she was saying in Scripture: “How short a time it was when I left them before I found the one my soul loved. I held fast to him and will not let him go.”

How do we hold fast to him? Not by chaining him up or tying him with ropes, but by bonds of love, by spiritual reins, and by the longing of the soul.

If you too, like the bride, want to hold fast to him, search for him and do not be afraid of suffering. It is often easier to find him among bodily torments, and in the very hands of oppressors.

His bride says, “How short a time it was after I left them.” In a short span, after a brief moment, when you have escaped from the hands of your oppressors without yielding to the powers of this world, the Prince will come to you, and he will not allow you to be tested for long.

Whoever searches for the Prince in this way and finds him can say, “I am holding fast to him, and I will not let him go before I bring him into my mother’s house, and into the room of the one who conceived me.” What is this “house,” and this “room” but the deep, secret places of your heart?

Maintain this house and sweep out its secret nooks until it becomes spotless and rises as a spiritual temple for a holy priesthood, firmly secured by its cornerstone, the Prince, so that the Holy Spirit will make his home in it. Whoever searches for the Prince in this way, and whoever prays to the Prince in this way, is not abandoned by him; no, the Prince comes again and again to visit this kind of person, because he is with us

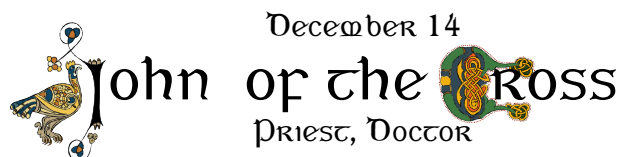
until the end of the world.

The Master's grace gave her strength in the battle, and she gained a high reputation before God and man; she spoke with wisdom in the presence of the authority, and therefore the Master of heaven and earth has loved her.

She is the virgin who prepared a joyful home for God in her heart, and therefore the Master of heaven and earth has loved her.

**Prayer**

Master, please give us courage through the prayers of St. Lucy, and as we celebrate her entrance into eternal glory, we ask to share her happiness in the life to come. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Fontiveros, Spain, ca. 1542. After a number of years as a Carmelite, he was persuaded by St. Teresa of Avila in 1568 to lead a reform among the brothers, bringing new energy to the Carmelites. Died at Ubeda in 1591.

*Third Reading*

*A Spiritual Song, by John of the Cross*

Though holy teachers have uncovered many mysteries and marvels, and devout souls have understood them in this earthly condition of ours, the greater part still remains to be uncovered by them, and even to be understood by them.

And so we must dig deeply in the Prince. He is like a rich mine with many pockets containing treasures; however deep we dig we will never find their end or their limit. In fact, in every pocket, new seams of fresh riches are discovered on every side.

This is the reason the Emissary Paul said of the Prince, "In him are



## December 14: John of the Cross, Priest, Doctor

hidden all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” The soul cannot enter these treasures or reach them unless it first crosses into and enters the thicket of suffering, enduring interior and exterior labors, and unless it first receives from God very many blessings in the intellect and the senses, and has undergone long spiritual training.

All these are minor things, preparing the souls for the high sanctuary of the knowledge of the mysteries of the Prince; this is the highest wisdom attainable in this life.

If only people would finally come to see that it is completely impossible to reach the thicket of the riches and wisdom of God except by first entering the thicket of a great deal of suffering, in such a way that the soul finds its consolation and desire there. The soul that longs for divine wisdom first and honestly chooses to enter the thicket of the cross.

And so St. Paul urges the Ephesians “not to grow tired in the middle of your troubles,” but “to be rooted and grounded in love, so that they will know with all the saints the breadth, length, height, and depth—know what is beyond knowledge, the love of the Prince, so as to be filled with the complete fullness of God.”

The gate that gives entry into these riches of his wisdom is the cross; because it is a narrow gate, and while many people search for the joys that can be gained through it, it is given to few to desire to pass through.

No eye can see, no ear can hear, no heart can imagine the marvels that God has prepared for those who love him.

Yet God has revealed to us through his Spirit the marvels that God has prepared for those who love him.

### Prayer

Father, since you endowed John of the Cross with a spirit of self-denial and a love of the cross, may we by following his example come to the eternal vision of your glory. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

From December 17 to January 1, the saints  
are found in the Proper of the Season

JANUARY 2  
ASIL THE GREAT  
REGORY NAZIANZEN  
 BISHOPS, DOCTORS

Basil was born of a Christian family at Caesarea in Cappadocia in 330. He was conspicuous for learning and virtue, and was a hermit for a time, but in 370 was made bishop of Caesarea. He fought against the Arians, and is famous for his Rule. He died on January 1, 379.

Gregory Nazianzen was also born in 330. He joined Basil as a hermit and was later ordained priest and bishop. In 381, he was elected bishop of Constantinople, but because of factions in the Church, he returned to Nazianzen where he died on January 25, 390. He was called “theologus.”

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by Gregory Nazianzen*

Basil and I were both in Athens; we had come, like tributaries of a river, from the same source in our native land, had separated from each other in pursuit of learning, and were now united again as if by a plan, because God had arranged things in this way.

I was not alone at the time in my regard for my friend, the great Basil. I knew his impeccable conduct, and the maturity and wisdom of his conversation. I tried to persuade others who did not know him as well to have the same regard for him; and many fell immediately under his spell, because they had already heard of him by reputation and rumor.

What was the result? Almost alone of those who had come to Athens to study, he was exempted from the usual initiation rites, because he was held in higher honor than his status as a first-year student seemed to warrant.

This was the prelude to our friendship, the kindling of the flame that was to bind us together. In this way, we began to feel affection for each other; and when in the course of time we acknowledged our friendship and recognized that our ambition was a life of true wisdom, we became everything to each other: we shared the same lodging, the same table,

## JANUARY 2: BASIL the GREAT, GREGORY NAZIANZEN<sup>27</sup>

the same desires, and the same goal. Our love for each other grew warmer and deeper every day.

The same hope inspired us: the pursuit of learning, which is an ambition particularly subject to envy; yet there was no envy between us. On the contrary, we made our rivalry an advantage. Our rivalry consisted in yielding first place to the other, not in each looking for it for himself; in fact, each of us looked on the other's success as his own.

We seemed to be two bodies with only one spirit. Though we cannot believe those who claim that "everything is in everything," yet you must believe that in our case each of us was in the other and with the other.

Our sole object and ambition was virtue, and a life of hope in the blessings that are to come; we wanted to withdraw from the world before we left it; and with this end in view, we arranged our lives and all our actions. We followed the guidance of God's law and spurred each other on to virtue. If it is not too boastful to say, we found in each other a standard and rule for distinguishing right from wrong.

Different men have different names, which they owe to their parents or themselves, to their own pursuits or achievements; but our great pursuit, the great name we wanted, was to be Christians, and to be called Christians.

The Master gives wisdom to those who are wise, and knowledge to the ones who have understanding. He reveals what is hidden deep; all light has its source in him.

One and the same Spirit is active in everyone, and gives each one what he pleases. He reveals what is hidden deep; all light has its source in him.

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you inspired the Church with the example and teaching of your saints Basil and Gregory, may we please come to know your truth in humility and put it into action with faith and love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

JANUARY 4


**Elizabeth Ann Seton**

  
 MARRIED WOMAN, RELIGIOUS

Born Aug. 28, 1774 as an Episcopalian; converted to Catholicism. Married William Seton and reared 5 children; traveled to Italy where William died. Converted in 1805, and established a Catholic school. In 1809 she founded a school in Emmetsburg, Maryland; and also schools in New York and St. Louis. Died on January 4, 1821; declared a saint by Paul VI on September 14, 1975.

*Third Reading*
*A Conference to her Spiritual Daughters  
by Elizabeth Ann Seton*

I will tell you what is my own great help. I once read or heard that an interior life means but the continuation of our Savior's life in us; that the great object of all his mysteries is to merit for us the grace of his interior life and communicate it to us, it being the end of his mission to lead us into the sweet land of promise, a life of constant union with himself. And what was the first rule of our dear Savior's life? You know it was to do his father's will. Well, then, the first end I propose in our daily work is to do the will of God; secondly, to do it in the manner he wills; and thirdly, to do it because it is his will.

I know what his will is by those who direct me; whatever they bid me to do, if it is ever so small in itself, it is the will of God for me. Then do it in the manner he wills it, not sewing an old thing as if it were new, or a new thing as if it were old; not fretting because the oven is too hot, or in a fuss because it is too cold. You understand—not flying and driving because you are hurried, not creeping like a snail because no one pushes you. Our dear Savior was never in extremes. The third object is to do his will *because* God wills it, that is, to be ready to quit at any moment and do anything else to which you may be called . . .

You think it very hard to lead a life of such restraint unless you keep your eye of faith always open. Perseverance is a great grace. To go on gaining and advancing every day, we must be resolute, and bear and suffer as our blessed forerunners did. Which of them gained heaven without a struggle? . . .

## JANUARY 4: Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious 29

What are our real trials? By what name shall we call them? One cuts herself out a cross of pride; another, one of causeless discontent; another, one of restless impatience or peevish fretfulness. But is the whole day any better than children's play if looked at with the common eye of faith? Yet we know certainly that our God calls us to a holy life, that he gives us every grace, every abundant grace; and though we are so weak of ourselves, this grace is able to carry us through every obstacle without difficulty.

But we lack courage to keep a continual watch over nature, and therefore, year after year, with our thousand graces, multiplied resolutions, and fair promises, we run around in a circle of misery and imperfections. After a long time in the service of God, we come nearly to the point from whence we started out, and perhaps with even less ardor for penance and mortification than when we began our consecration to him.

You are now in your first setout. Be above the vain fears of nature and efforts of your enemy. You are children of eternity. Your immortal crown awaits you, and the best of Fathers waits there to reward your duty and love. You may indeed sow here in tears, but you may be sure there to reap in joy.

The time is growing short, so we must enjoy ourselves as if we were not enjoying ourselves; we must work in the world without becoming immersed in it, because the world as we know it is beginning to disintegrate.

We have not adopted the spirit of the world, because the world as we know it is beginning to disintegrate.

### Prayer

Master God, since you blessed Elizabeth Seton with gifts of grace as wife and mother, educator and foundress, so that she would spend her life in service to your people, then through her example and prayers may we learn to express our love for you in love for our fellow human beings. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.


**ohn**

**January 5**  
**Neumann**  
 Bishop

Born in Bohemia on March 20, 1811, he had a great desire to go to the American missions, and came to the United States as a cleric and was ordained in New York in 1836. In 1840, he entered the Redemptorists, and labored in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. In 1852, he was consecrated bishop of Philadelphia, where he worked to establish parish schools and for new parishes for immigrants. He died on January 5, 1860, and was beatified in 1963.

*Third Reading*

*A letter to Cardinal Barnabo  
by John Neumann*

Indeed, I have apparently delayed too long in writing to the Holy See the letter promised by the Archbishop of Baltimore in the name of the council. However, this delay was not without reason. For the council was scarcely finished and I was discussing the division of the Diocese of Philadelphia and my translation to a new see with one of the Fathers of the council, when the Father intimated to me that he did not know whether that could more probably be hoped for, since the Holy See thought that I would resign from the episcopate, or wished to resign. In the same way, when the Archbishop of Baltimore informed me of the designation as coadjutor, he added that in the event that I should persevere in the desire to resign, the Holy See would permit me to give the title of the ecclesiastical property to the same coadjutor.

I was no little disturbed by the fear that I had done something that so displeased the Holy Father that my resignation would appear desirable to him. If this be the case, I am prepared without any hesitation to leave the episcopacy. I have taken this burden out of obedience, and I have labored with all my powers to fulfill the duties of my office, and with God's help, as I hope, not without fruit.

When the care of temporal things weighed upon my mind and it seemed to me that my character was little suited for the very cultured world of Philadelphia, I made known to my fellow bishops during the Baltimore council of 1858 that it seemed opportune to me to request my translation to one or the other see that was to be erected (namely in the

City of Pottsville or in Wilmington, North Carolina). But to give up the episcopal career never entered my mind, although I was conscious of my unworthiness and ineptitude; for things had not come to such a pass that I had one or the other reason out of the six for which a bishop could safely ask the Holy Father permission to resign. For a long time, I have doubted what should be done. . . .

Although my coadjutor has proposed to me that he would take the new see if it is erected, I have thought it much more opportune and I have asked the Fathers that he be appointed to the See of Philadelphia, since he is much more highly endowed with facility and alacrity concerning the administration of temporal things. Indeed, I am much more accustomed to the country, and will be able to care for the people and faithful living in the mountains, in the coal mines, and on the farms, since I would be among them.

If, however, it should be displeasing to His Holiness to divide the diocese, I am, indeed, prepared to remain in the same condition in which I am at present, or if God so inspires His Holiness to give the whole administration of the diocese to the Most Reverend James Wood, I am equally prepared to resign from the episcopate and to go where I may more securely prepare myself for death and for the account which must be rendered to the Divine Justice.

I desire nothing but to fulfill the wish of the Holy Father, whatever it may be.

Well done, my good, faithful slave; you have been faithful in the little tasks I gave you, and now I will entrust you with greater ones. Come and share my joy.

Master, you gave me five gold coins; and here I have brought you back double. Come and share my joy.

#### Prayer

Father, since you called blessed John Neumann to labor for the good news among the people of the new world, and since his ministry strengthened many others in the Christian faith, may faith grow strong in this land through his prayers. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

JANUARY 6  
 ANDRÉ  BESSETTE  
 Religious

Born August 9, 1845 in St. Grégoire near Montreal, Alfred Bessette was orphaned at age 12. He was poor, uneducated, and sickly, but worked as a farmhand, apprentice shoemaker, baker, blacksmith, and tinsmith, and in the textile mills in Connecticut. In 1870, he entered the Congregation of the Holy Cross and took the name Brother André, and acted as porter at the College of Notre Dame in Montreal. He gained a reputation as a healer. In 1904, he founded the Oratory of St. Joseph. He was known as a man of prayer and friend of the poor. He died on January 6, 1937, and was beatified on May 23, 1982.

*Third Reading*

*A Homily on Acts by St. John Chrysostom*

There is nothing colder than a Christian who does not try to save others. You cannot plead poverty here; the widow who offered the two coppers will be your accuser. The Rock said, “I have no silver and gold.” Paul was so poor that he was often hungry and went without food necessary for him.

You cannot plead low-class birth, because they were born to the low class, with humble ancestry. You cannot offer the excuse of lack of education, because they were uneducated. You cannot plead ill-health, because Timothy also had poor health, with frequent illnesses.

Each person can help his neighbor if only he is willing to do what is in his power. Look at the trees that do not bear fruit; have you not noticed how strong and fine they are, straight, smooth, and tall? If we had a garden, we would far rather have trees with fruit—pomegranates and olives—to trees for pleasure, not usefulness; and any use these have is small.

This is the way it is with those people who think only of their own concerns. In fact, they are even worse; the trees are at least useful for building or protection, while selfish people are only fit for punishment. That was how it was with those foolish virgins, who were chaste, pretty, and self-controlled, but did nothing for anyone; so they are eaten up in the fire. That is how it is with people who refuse to give food to the



Prince.

Notice that none of them is accused of personal sins. They are not accused of fornication or perjury or any sin of this sort at all, only of not helping anyone else. The man who buried the talent was like this; his life was blameless, but he was of no service to others.

How can a person like this be a Christian? Tell me, if yeast did not make the whole mass like itself, is it really yeast? Or if perfume did not manage to spread its fragrance all around itself, would we call it perfume?

Do not say that it is impossible for you to influence other people. If you are a Christian, it is impossible for this not to happen. Things found in nature cannot be denied; and it is the same here, because it is a question of the nature of a Christian.

Do not insult God. If you say that the sun cannot shine, you have insulted him. If you say that a Christian cannot help others, you have insulted God and called him a liar. It is easier for the sun not to give warmth or shine than for the Christian not to shed his light. It is easier for light to be darkness than for this to happen.


So do not say that it is impossible; the opposite is impossible. Do not insult God. If we have put our affairs in order, all this will necessarily happen, and will follow as a natural consequence. The light of a Christian cannot avoid being noticed; so bright a lamp cannot be hidden.

Now you are light in the Master; so live as if you belong by nature to the light; light makes you gentle, loving, and true.

I have given you to the world as its light, and you must shine for everyone to see; light makes you gentle, loving, and true.

#### Prayer

Master God, friend of the little people, since you gave your slave Brother André a great devotion to Saint Joseph and a special commitment to the poor and suffering, please help us through his intercession to follow his example of prayer and love and so come to share in your glory with him. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.


 JANUARY 7  
**RAYMOND OF PENYAFORT**  
 Religious

Born near Barcelona, c. 1175. He became a canon in the Diocese of Barcelona and then joined the Dominicans. At the command of Pope Gregory X, he produced a collection of canon law; he was elected general of his order and governed wisely. Most notable work: *Summa Casuum* about the correct administration of Penance. Died, 1275.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Raymond of Penyafort*

The preacher of God's truth has told us that everyone who wants to live virtuously in the Prince will suffer oppression. If he told the truth and did not lie, the only exception to this general statement is, I think, the person who either neglects or does not know how "to live with moderation, honesty, and virtuously in this world."

You must never find yourself among those whose household is peaceful, quiet, and free of care: those on whom the Master's punishment does not descend, those who live out their days in prosperity, and in an eyeblink go down into hell.

Your purity of life and your devotion deserve a reward, and demand one; but because you are acceptable and pleasing to God, your purity of life must be made still purer, by frequent slaps in the face, until you reach perfect sincerity of heart. If you feel the sword falling on you from time to time with double or triple its normal force, you should look on this with sheer joy as the sign of love.

The two-edged sword consists of conflict on the outside and fears on the inside. It falls with twice or three times its force inside, when the clever spirit disturbs the depths of your hearts with lying temptations. You have learned enough already about this kind of warfare, or you would not have been able to enjoy peace and interior tranquillity in all its beauty.

The sword falls with twice or three times its force outside when, without there being any cause, persecution breaks out from inside the Church on spiritual matters, where wounds are more serious, especially when they are inflicted by friends.

This is that enviable and blessed cross of the Prince, which Andrew,

that manly saint, received with a joyful heart: the cross which is the only thing we have to brag about, as God's chosen instrument Paul has told us.

And so look at Jesus, the origin and preserver of faith; he suffered in complete sinlessness, and at the hands of those who belonged to him; and he was considered as one of the evil people. As you drink the cup of Master Jesus—and how glorious it is!—show your gratitude to the Master, who gives every blessing.

May the God of love and peace set your hearts at rest and give you speed on your journey; may he meanwhile shelter you from disturbance by others in the secret recesses of his love, until he finally brings you into that place of total fullness where you will rest forever in the vision of peace, in the security of trust, and in the restful enjoyment of his wealth.

The light of his teaching has shone on those whose home was in darkness; by the strength of his love, he has set the poor free and taken captives out of their chains.

He led away those who wandered in the paths of sin, and freed the poor from the grasp of their oppressors; by the strength of his love, he has set the poor free and taken captives out of their chains.

**Prayer**

Master, since you gave Saint Raymond the gift of sympathy in his service to sinners, may his prayers free us from the slavery of sin and help us love and serve you in freedom. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

**January 13**

**Hilary**

**Bishop, Doctor**

Born at Poitiers at the beginning of the fourth century. About 350, he was chosen bishop of Poitiers, and was exiled for fighting the Arians by Constantine. He wrote works of wisdom and learning, and died in 367.

*Third Reading**A Sermon on the Trinity by St. Hilary*

I am perfectly aware, omnipotent God and Father, that in my life I owe you a very special duty, which is to make every thought and word of mine speak of you.

In fact, you have bestowed this gift of speech on me, and it can produce no greater return than to be at your service; it is for making you known as Father, the Father of the only God, the only Son, and for preaching this to the world that does not know you, and to the heretics who refuse to believe in you.

In this matter, the declaring of my intention has very little value; what I really need is to pray for the gift of your help and your mercy. As we spread out our sails of trusting faith and public acknowledgment of you, please fill them with the breath of your Spirit, to propel us on as we begin the course of announcing your truth. We have received a promise, and the one who made the promise is trustworthy: "Ask, and what you ask will be given to you; search, and you will find what you are searching for; knock, and the door will open for you."

Yes, in our poverty, we will pray for our needs. We will study the sayings of your prophets and Emissaries with undivided attention, and knock for entrance wherever the gift of understanding is kept. But it is in your hands, Master, to grant our petitions, to be there when we make our search, and to open the door when we knock.

There is an inertia in our nature that makes us stupid, and in our attempt to penetrate your truth, we are held within the bounds of ignorance by the weakness of our minds. Yet we do grasp divine ideas by serious attention to your teaching and by obedience to the faith which carries us beyond mere human understanding.

And so we trust in you to inspire the beginnings of this ambitious venture, to strengthen its progress, and to call us into a partnership in spirit with the prophets and Emissaries; and in order to accomplish this, may we please grasp precisely what they meant to say, and take each word in its real and authentic sense. That is, we are about to say what they have already asserted as part of the mystery of revelation: that you are the eternal God, the Father of the eternal, sole-sired God; that you are one thing and not one born from something else, and that Master Jesus is also one thing with you, born from you from you from all eternity. We must not preach a change in truth about the number of

gods; we must not deny that he is fathered by you, the one true God, and we must not assert that he is anything else but the true God, born from you who are in fact God the Father.

Please impart to us, then, the meaning of the words of Scripture and the light to understand it, with reverence for the teaching and confidence in its truth. Please also bestow on us the power to express what we believe. Through the prophets and Emissaries we know about you, the one God the Father, and the Master Prince Jesus. May we have the grace, in the face of heretics who deny you, to honor you as God, who is not alone, and to declare this as the truth.

Everyone who asserts that Prince Jesus came as a man of flesh and blood belongs to God; and everyone who denies this of Jesus does not belong to God. This is how you will know the spirit of truth as distinct from the spirit of falsehood.

A person who asserts that Jesus is the Son of God lives in God and God lives in him. This is how you will know the spirit of truth as distinct from the spirit of falsehood.

#### Prayer

Omnipotent God, since St. Hilary defended the divinity of your Son the Prince, please give us a deeper understanding of this mystery and help us to assert it in all its truth. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Egypt around 250; called the “Father of Monks.” After his parents died, he gave his property to the poor and went into solitude and penance. He attracted students and worked for the Church, giving support to believers during the persecution of Diocletian, and helping St. Athanasius against the Arians. Died in 356.

*Third Reading**Life of St. Anthony by St. Athanasius*

When Anthony was about 18 or 20 years old, his parents died, leaving him with an only sister. He cared for her, since she was very young, and also looked after their home.

Not six months after his parents' death, as he was on his way to church for his usual visit, he began to think of how the Emissaries had left everything and followed the Savior, and also about those mentioned in *Acts* who had sold what they owned and brought the Emissaries the money for distribution to those in need. He also reflected on the great hope stored up in heaven for people like this. This was all in his mind when, as he entered the church as the Good News was being read, he heard the Master's words to the rich man, "If you want to be complete, go sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have wealth in heaven; and then come and follow me."

It seemed to Anthony that it was God who had brought the sacred people to his mind and that the words in the Good News had been spoken directly to him. At once, he left the church and gave away to the villagers all the property he had inherited, about 200 acres of very beautiful and fertile land, so that it would cause no distraction to his sister and himself. He sold all his other possessions as well, and gave to the poor the considerable sum of money he collected—though he kept a few things to care for his sister.

The next time he went to the church, he heard the Master say in the Good News, "Do not worry about tomorrow." Without a moment's hesitation, he went out and gave the poor all that he had left. He placed his sister in the care of some well-known and trustworthy virgins and arranged for her to be brought up in the convent. Then he gave himself up to an ascetic life, not far from his home. He kept a strict watch over himself, and practiced great austerity; he did manual work, because he heard the words, "If a person does not want to work, he is not to be fed." He spent some of his earnings on bread, and gave the rest to the poor.

Since he had learned that we should always be praying, even when we are by ourselves, he prayed constantly. In fact, he paid so much attention when Scripture was read that nothing escaped him, and because he retained everything he heard, his memory took the place of books for him.

When they saw the kind of life he lived, the villagers and all the good men he knew called him the “Friend of God,” and they loved him as a son and brother.

If you want to be complete, go sell what you have and give the money to the poor, and you will be rich in heaven; and then come follow me.

No one who will not renounce everything he owns can be a student of mine; then come follow me.

**Prayer**

Dear Father, since you called St. Anthony to renounce the world and serve you in the solitude of the desert, may we by his prayers and example learn to repudiate ourselves and love you above everything. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Elected bishop of Rome in 236. In 250, at the beginning of the persecution of Decius, he was martyred, and buried in the cemetery of St. Callixtus.

*Third Reading*

*Letter about the Death of St. Fabian  
by St. Cyprian and the Roman Church*

When he was informed of the death of Pope Fabian, St. Cyprian sent this letter to the priests and deacons of Rome:

“My dear brothers, while the news of the death of my good colleague was still uncertain, and there were various views about it, I received your letter delivered through the courtesy of Subdeacon Crementius, in which I was fully informed about Fabian’s glorious death. I was very happy that his virtuous end was in accordance with the integrity of his administration; and so I offer you my congratulations also because you are honoring his memory with this striking and praiseworthy

testimony.

Through you, we can see quite clearly what an honor for you is the glorious legacy of the one who was in authority over you, and what an example of faith and courage it offers us. That is, just as the defection of one of our leaders has such a harmful effect on the stability of those who follow him, it is helpful and encouraging when a bishop offers himself as a model for his brothers and sisters by the constancy of his faith.”

Apparently, before Cyprian received this letter, the Church of Rome had given the community at Carthage evidence of its loyalty in time of persecution.

“Our Church stands firmly in the faith, though some have fallen away because they are afraid of losing their prominent positions, or because of other personal sufferings. Even though these people have left us, we have not given them up; in the past, we urged them and we still encourage them to change their attitudes, in the hope that they will receive pardon from the one who can give it—while if they were abandoned by us, they might become worse.

“And so you see, brothers and sisters, that you should act in the same way; in this way, those who have fallen, and then changed their attitude because of your encouragement, will admit their Christianity if they are ever arrested again. Yet you do have other responsibilities, and we have some suggestions to make about them. If any of those who have fallen into this temptation become ill and, after changing their attitude, want to receive communion, they should certainly be helped. Widows, the destitute who cannot support themselves, and those who are in prison or have been evicted from their homes should obviously have someone to help them; and also catechumens who are ill ought not to be disappointed in receiving help.

“Your brothers and sisters in prison send you their regards, as do the priests and the entire Church, which cannot sleep for its great anxiety to pray for all those who invoke the Master’s name. And so we ask all you to remember us also.”

I want to leave this world and be with the Prince; I consider all that this world offers to be worthless if I can only gain union with the Prince. Life for me means the Prince, and death is a prize to be won.

Even if I am to be poured out as if I were a libation on the sacrificial



altar of your faith, I am happy about it, and wish to share my happiness with you. Life for me means the Prince, and death is a prize to be won.

**Prayer**

Dear God, our Father, the glory of your priests, may the prayers of your martyr Fabian help us to share his faith and offer you loving service. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*Martyred in Rome at the beginning of the persecution of Diocletian.*

*Third Reading*

*Exposition of Psalm 118 by St. Ambrose*

“To enter God’s Kingdom, we must endure a great deal of hardship.” If there is a good deal of persecution, there is a good deal of hardship; where there are many laurel wreaths of victory, there are many tests of strength. And so it is to your advantage if there are a number of people to persecute you; you can find a path to victory more easily among a many persecutions.

Take the example of the martyr Sebastian, whose birthday in glory we celebrate today. At a time when persecution had either ceased or had not yet begun or was of a milder kind, he realized that there was little to no chance to suffer; so he set out for Rome, where bitter persecutions were raging because of the Christians’ fervor. There he endured suffering; there he gained his crown. He went to the city as a foreigner and set up a home there of undying glory. If there had been only one persecutor, he would not have gained a martyr’s crown.

The visible persecutors are not the only ones; there are also invisible persecutors, and they are much more numerous—and this is more serious. Like a king intent on persecution, sending orders to persecute to his many agents, and establishing different persecutors in each city or

province, the devil directs his many slaves in their work of persecution, whether this is open or in the souls of individuals. Scripture says of this kind of persecution, “Everyone who wants to live a holy life in the Prince suffers persecution.” “Everyone” suffers persecution; there is no exception; and who can claim exemption if the Master himself endured the test of persecution? There are so many today who are secret martyrs for the Prince, and who provide evidence to Jesus as their Master. The Emissary knew this kind of martyrdom, this faithful witnessing to the Prince; he said, “This is our pride, the testimony of our conscience.”

For the Law of God, this holy man fought to the death; he was afraid of no evil threats; his faith was based on solid rock.

He gave up earthly joys, and so gained the Kingdom of heaven; his faith was based on solid rock.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, please fill us with that spirit of courage which gave your martyr Sebastian strength to offer his life as a faithful witness, and help us to learn from him to cherish your law, and to obey you rather than human beings. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Martyred at Rome during the second half of the third century or at the beginning of the fourth. Pope Damasus adorned her tomb with sacred poetry, and many Fathers of the Church, including Ambrose, honored her in their writings.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Treatise on Virgins by St. Ambrose*

Today is the birthday of a virgin; let us imitate her purity; it is the birthday of a martyr; let us offer ourselves in sacrifice. It is the birthday of St. Agnes, who is said to have suffered martyrdom at the age of

twelve. The cruelty that did not spare her youth shows all the more clearly the power of faith in finding one so young to give evidence of it.

There was little or no room in that small body for a wound. Though she could scarcely receive the blow, she could rise above it. Girls of her age cannot even bear their parents' frowns and cry as if seriously wounded when pricked by a needle. Yet she shows no fear of her executioners' bloodstained hands; she is not intimidated by the clank of the heavy chains. She offers her whole body to the sword of the fierce soldier. She is too young to know of death, yet is ready to face it. When she is dragged against her will to the altars, she stretches out her hands to the Master through the flames, making the triumphant sign of the Prince, the victor, on the altars of sacrilege. She puts her neck and hands in iron chains, but no chain can hold her tiny limbs fast.

We have here a new kind of martyrdom; she is too young to be punished, and yet old enough for a martyr's crown; she is not fit for the fight, and yet, effortless in victory, she shows herself a master of courage despite the handicap of her youth. She would not be hurrying as a bride to join her husband more joyfully than she shows herself to be as a virgin on her way to punishment, crowned with holiness of life rather than flowers, adorned with the Prince himself rather than braided hair.

Though surrounded by tears, she sheds no tears herself. The crowds are amazed at her recklessness in throwing away her life untasted, as if she had already lived it to the full. Everyone is astounded that someone who is not yet of legal age can give her testimony to God. So she succeeds in convincing others of her testimony about God, though her testimony in human affairs could not yet be accepted. What is beyond the power of nature, they argue, must come from its Creator.

There were so many menacing looks from her executioner to frighten her, so many promises made to win her over, so many influential people who wanted her in marriage. She answered, "To hope that anyone else will please me does wrong to my Husband; I will belong to the one who first chose me for himself. Why are you holding back, executioner; if eyes I do not want can desire this body, then let it die!" She stood still and prayed, and offered her neck.

You could see fear in the eyes of the executioner, as if he were the one condemned; his right hand shook and his face paled as he saw the girl's peril, while she had no fear for herself. There was one victim, but

a twin martyrdom, to modesty and to religion; Agnes preserved her virginity, and gained a martyr's crown.

Let us keep the feast of St. Agnes by recalling all she suffered. While still so young, she overcame death and found true life.

And the reason is that the giver of life was her only love. While still so young, she overcame death and found true life.

**Prayer**

Omnipotent, eternal God, since you choose what the world considers weak to embarrass worldly power, may we who celebrate the birth of St. Agnes into eternal joy be loyal to the faith she professed. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



This deacon of the Church at Saragossa was martyred during the persecution of Diocletian in Valencia in Spain after suffering extreme tortures. His cult immediately spread through the Church.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

“It has been granted on the Prince’s behalf to you not only that you would believe in him, but that you would suffer for him.”

Vincent had received both these gifts, and kept them as his own. That is, how could he have them if he had not received them? And he displayed his faith in what he said, and his perseverance in what he suffered.

No one should rely on his own feelings when he speaks out, or be confident in his own strength when he undergoes hardship. Whenever we speak with the good judgment we should show, our wisdom comes from him, and whenever we endure suffering courageously, our perseverance comes from him.

Think of how our Master the Prince in the Good News encouraged his students; it is the very King of martyrs equipping his troops with spiritual arms, explaining their battles, offering them support, and promising them their reward. He once told his students, “In this world you will have oppression,” and then to quiet their fears, he added, “But be brave; I have won the battle with the world.”

There is no need to be surprised, then, my brothers I love so much, that Vincent won his battle in the one who won the battle with the world. The Prince said, “In this world you will have oppression,” but in such a way that the oppression will not overwhelm you, and the attack will not conquer you.

The world draws up a double battle line against the Prince’s army; it offers temptations to lead us astray, and strikes terror into us to break our spirit; and in this way, if our personal pleasures do not hold us captive, and if we are not frightened by brutality, the world is conquered. At both of these attacks, the Prince rushes to our aid, and the Christian is not conquered. If you were to consider in Vincent’s martyrdom only human persistence, then his act is incredible from the beginning; but when you first recognize the power to be from God, he stops being a source of amazement.

Such savagery was being vented on the martyr’s body while such serenity was issuing from his lips, such harsh cruelties were being inflicted on his limbs while such confidence rang out in his words, that we would think that by some miracle, as Vincent was suffering, one person was speaking while another one was being tortured.

And this, my brothers, was true; it was the real truth; another person was speaking. The Prince in the Good News promised this to those who were to be his witnesses, to those he was preparing for contests of this kind. He said, “Do not give thought to how or what you are to say; because it is the Spirit of your Father who is speaking in you, not you who are speaking.” So it was Vincent’s body that suffered, but the Spirit who was speaking. And at his voice, disrespect for God was not only overcome, but human frailty was given solace.

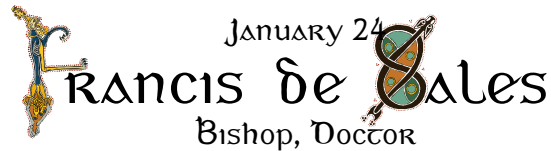
The Master has tested me in the way gold is refined by fire; I have walked in his path, and have not wandered off his road.

I consider everything this world offers to be worthless if I can only

know the Prince and share his sufferings. I have walked in his path, and have not wandered off his road.

**Prayer**

Eternal Father, since you gave St. Vincent the courage to endure torture and death for the Good News, please fill us with your Spirit and strengthen us in your love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Savoy in 1567. After ordination, he exerted himself for the restoration of Catholicism in his country. He was chosen Bishop of Geneva, and showed himself a true shepherd, strengthening the faith of his flock by his writings, works, and example. Died at Lyons on Dec. 28, 1622, and was buried at Annecy on this day.

*Third Reading Introduction to the Devout Life by St. Francis de Sales*

When God the Creator made everything, he commanded the plants to bear the fruit proper to the species of each; in the same way, he has commanded Christians to bear the fruit of devotion in accordance with the character, class, and vocation of each person.

I say that devotion must be practiced in different ways by noblemen and working people, by servants and princes, by widows, unmarried girls, and by married women. But even this distinction is not enough; because the practice of devotion must be adapted to the strength, occupation, and duties of each individual.

So please tell me, Philothea, whether it is proper for a bishop to want to lead the solitary life of a Carthusian, or for married people to be no more concerned than Capuchins about increasing their income; or for a working man to spend the whole of his day in church like a religious, or,

## JANUARY 24: FRANCIS DE SALES, BISHOP, DOCTOR<sup>47</sup>

for that matter, for a religious to be constantly exposed like a bishop to all the events and circumstances that bear on the needs of our neighbors.

Is not this sort of devotion ridiculous, unorganized, and intolerable? Yet this absurd error occurs often; but true devotion, Philothea, does not destroy anything at all. No, it completes and fulfills everything; in fact, if it ever works against or is an enemy of anyone's legitimate status and vocation, then it is very definitely false devotion.

Bees collect honey from flowers in such a way as to do the least damage and destruction to them, and leave them whole, undamaged, and fresh, just as they found them. True devotion does still more: not only does it not injure any sort of vocation, it even adorns and enhances it.

In addition, just as every sort of gem becomes brighter and more sparkling when it is thrown into honey, each person becomes more acceptable and adapted to his own vocation when he sets his vocation in the context of devotion. Through devotion, your family cares become more peaceful, mutual love between husband and wife becomes more sincere, the service we owe the authorities becomes more faithful, and our work, no matter what it is, becomes more pleasant and attractive.

It is therefore an error and even a heresy to want to exclude the exercise of devotion from military divisions, from artisans' workshops, from the courts of princes, or from family households. I admit, Philothea, my friend, that the type of devotion which is purely contemplative, monastic, and religious cannot be exercised in these sorts of statuses; but besides this threefold type of devotion, there are many others fit for developing those who live in a secular condition.

And so, in whatever status we happen to be, we can and must aspire to the life of perfection.

Be kind and gentle toward each other; forgive each other as God has forgiven you in the Prince. Be imitators of God the Father, who loves you like his own children.

Take my harness upon you, and learn from me, because I am gentle, with a humble heart. Be imitators of God the Father, who loves you like his own children.

## Prayer

Dear Father, since you gave Francis de Sales the spirit of gentleness to befriend everyone on the way to rescue, please lead us by his example to show your gentle love in the service of our fellow men. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

JANUARY 25  
 Conversion of  
 St. Paul  
 APOSTLE

*Third Reading**A Homily by St. John Chrysostom*

More than anyone else, Paul has shown us what man really is, in what our nobility consists, and the virtue this particular animal is capable of. Each day he aimed higher still; each day he rose with greater zeal and faced with new eagerness the dangers that threatened him. He summed up his attitude in the words, "I forget what is behind and push on to what is ahead." When he saw death hanging over him, he asked others to share his happiness: "Be happy and delighted with me!" And when danger, injustice, and abuse were upon him, he said, "I am satisfied with weakness, mistreatment, and persecution." He called these the weapons of virtue, and in this way told us that he gained a good deal of benefit from them.

And so, amid the traps set for him by his enemies, with a joyful heart he turned every attack of theirs into a victory for himself; though he was constantly beaten, abused, and cursed, he took pride in it as though he were celebrating a triumphal procession and taking trophies home, and he displayed his gratitude to God for all of it: "Thank God, who is always victorious in us!"

This is why he was far more eager for the shameful abuse that his zeal in preaching brought him than we are for the most gratifying honors, and was more eager for death than we are for life, and for poverty than



## JANUARY 25: CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, EMISSARY<sup>49</sup>

we are for wealth; he yearned for labor far more than others yearn for rest after labor. The one thing he feared—in fact, dreaded—was to offend God; nothing else could move him. And so the only thing he really wanted was to please God.

The most important thing of all to him, however, was that he knew that he was loved by the Prince. Since he enjoyed this love, he considered himself far more fortunate than anyone else; and if he were without it, it would be no satisfaction to be the friend of authorities and powers. He preferred to be loved in this way and be the most insignificant of everyone, or even to be among the damned, than to be without that love and be among the great and honored.

To be separated from that love was, in his eyes, the greatest and most extreme of all tortures; the pain of that loss alone would have been hell: endless, unbearable torment.

And so too, in being loved by the Prince, he thought of himself as possessing life, the world, the angels, the present and future, the Kingdom, the promise, and countless blessings. Apart from that love, nothing saddened or pleased him, because he did not consider anything on earth to be either bitter or sweet.

Paul set no store by the things that fill our visible world, any more than a man puts a value on the withered grass in the field. As for tyrannical rulers or the people enraged against him, he paid them no more notice than if they were gnats. Death itself and pain and whatever torture might come were just child's play to him, provided that by them he could bear some of the burden for the sake of the Prince.

God was merciful to me, because in my lack of faith I acted out of ignorance. The abundant grace of our Master was poured over me and gave me the faith and love which are ours through union with Jesus the Prince.

I do not deserve to be called an Emissary, because I oppressed God's community. The abundant grace of our Master was poured over me and gave me the faith and love which are ours through union with Jesus the Prince.

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you taught the Good News to the whole

world through the preaching of your Emissary Paul, may those of us who celebrate his conversion to the faith follow him in providing evidence of your truth. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 “Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did recoil from the Virgin’s womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.

We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

JANUARY 26  
ΤΙΜΟΘΗΥ ΑΝΔ ΤΙΤΟΥΣ  
ΒΙΣΗΡΟΥΣ

Students and assistants of St. Paul. Timothy was in charge of the Church  
at Ephesus and Titus of the Church in Crete.

*Third Reading*

*A Homily by St. John Chrysostom*

Though he was housed in a cramped prison, Paul lived in heaven. He accepted beatings and wounds more readily than others reach out for rewards; he loved sufferings as much as prizes; in fact, he thought of them as his prizes, and so called them a grace or gift. Think of what this means. “To set sail and be with the Prince” was certainly a reward, while staying in his body meant struggle; yet his longing for the Prince was so great that he wanted to defer his reward and stay in the thick of the fight; those were his priorities.

Now, to be separated from the presence of the Prince meant struggle and pain for Paul; in fact, it was a greater hardship than any other struggle or pain would be. And to be with the Prince was a matchless reward; and yet, for the sake of the Prince, Paul chose the separation.

But you say, “Because of the Prince, Paul found all this pleasant.” I cannot deny that, because he found intense pleasure from what gives us pain. And I need not simply think of dangers and hardships; it was true even of the intense sorrow that made him cry, “Is there anyone weak and I am not weak? Is there anyone who has an obstacle in his way and I am not enraged?”

I urge you not simply to admire, but to imitate this splendid example

of virtue, because if we do, we can share his winner's crown also. Are you surprised when I say that if you have Paul's merits, you will share the same reward? Then listen to Paul himself: "I have run the race, I have competed in the good contest; I have kept the faith. What is left is that a crown for virtue is waiting for me, and the Master, who is a just referee, will give it to me on that day; and not just to me, but to those who are eager for his coming." You see how he calls everyone to share the same glory? And since the same crown of glory is offered to everyone, we should be eager to exert ourselves to deserve these promised blessings.

In thinking of Paul, we should not simply consider his noble and sublime virtues or the strong and ready will that prepared him for such graces, we should also realize that he shares our nature in every respect. If we do, then even what is very hard will seem easy and light to us; we will work hard during the short time we have on earth, and someday we will wear the incorruptible, immortal winner's crown. And we will do this by the grace and mercy of our Master Prince Jesus, to whom all glory and power belongs, now and always through ages of ages. Amen.

Man of God, you must exert yourself for holiness, goodness, fidelity, love, patience, and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, and win the prize of eternal life.

Preach nothing but healthy teaching. Fight the good fight of faith, and win the prize of eternal life.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you gave the saints Timothy and Titus the courage and wisdom of the Emissaries, may their prayers help us to live holy lives and lead us to heaven, our true home. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

JANUARY 27  
 ANGELA  MERICI  
VIRGIN

Born in 1470 in Desenzano in Lombardy. She joined the Third Order of St. Francis and called together girls whom she instructed in charitable works. In 1535, under the patronage of St. Ursula, she founded in Brescia a congregation of women who taught poor girls the Christian life. Died in 1540.

*Third Reading*                      *The Spiritual Testament by St. Angela Merici*

Mothers and sisters I love so much in the Prince: In the first place exert yourselves with all your power and zeal to be open. With the help of God, try to receive such good advice that, led only by the love of God and an eagerness to save souls, you will fulfill your commission.

Only if the responsibilities committed to you are rooted firmly in this twofold charity will they bear beneficial and saving results. As our Savior says, “A good tree is not able to bear bad fruit.”

He says, “a good tree”; that is, a good heart as well as a soul on fire with charity, can do nothing but good and holy works. For this reason, St. Augustine said, “Love, and do what you please”; or in other words, possess love and charity and then do what you please. It is as if he said, “Charity is not able to sin.”

I also beg you to be concerned about every one of your daughters. Carry them, so to speak, engraved upon your hearts—not merely their names, but their conditions and states, whatever they may be. This will not be difficult for you if you embrace them with a living love.

Mothers of children, even if they have a thousand, carry each and every one fixed in their hearts, and because of the strength of their love, they do not forget any of them. In fact, it seems that the more children they have, the more their love and care for each one is increased. Surely those who are mothers in spirit can and must act all the more in the same way, because spiritual love is more powerful than the love that comes from a blood relationship.

And so, mothers I love so much, if you love these daughters of yours with a living and unaffected charity, it will be impossible for you not to

have each and every one of them engraved upon your memory and in your mind.

I beg you again, exert yourself to draw them by love, modesty, and charity, and not by pride and harshness. Be sincerely kind to every one, as our Master said, "Learn from me, because I am gentle and of a humble heart." In this way, you are imitating God, of whom it is said, "He has arranged everything pleasantly." And again, Jesus said, "My harness does not chafe, and my burden is light."

You should also exercise pleasantness toward everyone, taking great care especially that what you have commanded will not be done by reason of force. God has, after all, given free will to everyone, and therefore, he forces no one and only indicates, calls, and persuades. Sometimes, however, something will have to be done with a stronger command; but do it in a suitable manner and according to the state and necessities of individuals; but even then we should be impelled only by charity and zeal for souls.

Now you are light in the Master, and so live as people who belong in the light. This light produces a harvest of goodness, holiness, and truth.

I have given you to the world as its light, and you must shine for everyone to see you. This light produces a harvest of goodness, holiness, and truth.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, may St. Angela commend us to your mercy, and may her charity and wisdom help us to be faithful to your teaching and to follow it in our lives. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

JANUARY 28  
**THOMAS AQUINAS**  
PRIEST DOCTOR

Born about 1225, he studied first at the monastery of Monte Cassino and later at the University of Naples. Afterwards, he joined the Friars Preachers and completed his studies at Paris and Cologne, under St. Albert the Great. He became a teacher, and wrote many volumes on philosophy and theology. Died near Terracina on March 7, 1274, but his memory is honored on January 28, the day his body was transferred to Toulouse in 1369.

*Third Reading*

*A Conference by St. Thomas Aquinas*

Why did the Son of God have to suffer for us? There was a great need, and it can be considered in a twofold way: in the first place, as a remedy for sin, and secondly, as an example of how to act.

It is a remedy because, in the face of all the evils which we incur because of our sins, we have found relief through the suffering of the Prince. Yet it is no less an example, because the suffering of the Prince is completely sufficient to form our lives. Anyone who wants to live perfectly should do nothing but despise what the Prince despised on the cross and desire what he desired, because the cross exemplifies every virtue.

If you are looking for an example of love, “no one has greater love than this: to give up his life for his friends.” This was the kind of man the Prince was on the cross; and if he gave his life for us, then it should not be difficult to bear whatever hardships arise for his sake.

If you are looking for patience, you will find no better example than the cross. Great patience occurs in two ways: either when one patiently suffers a great deal, or when one suffers things which one is able to avoid and does not. The Prince endured a great deal on the cross, and did so patiently, because “when he suffered, he did not threaten; he was led like a sheep to the slaughter and did not open his mouth.” Therefore, the Prince’s patience on the cross was great. “In patience, let us run for the prize waiting for us, looking on Jesus, the source and completer of our faith who, for the joy waiting for him, put up with his cross and despised the shame.”

If you are looking for an example of humility, look on the one who is crucified, because God wished to be judged by Pontius Pilate and to die.

If you are looking for an example of obedience, follow the one who became obedient to the Father even to death. “Just as by the disobedience of one man,” Adam, “many, many people became sinners, so in the obedience of one man, many were made virtuous.”

If you want an example of despising earthly things, follow the one who is the “King of kings and Master of masters, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” On the cross, he was stripped, made fun of, spat upon, struck, crowned with thorns, and given only vinegar and gall to drink.

Do not be attached, therefore, to clothing and riches, because “they divided my clothes among themselves.” Or to honors, because he experienced harsh words and even whipping; or to high status, because “they placed a crown of thorns they wove upon my head”; or to anything pleasurable, because “they gave me vinegar to drink to slake my thirst.”

I prayed, and understanding was given to me; I begged, and the spirit of wisdom came to me. I thought more highly of wisdom than my scepter or throne; compared with it, I considered wealth to be nothing.

Who is to know your plan, Master, unless you bestow wisdom and send your Holy Spirit from above? I thought more highly of wisdom than my scepter or throne; compared with it, I considered wealth to be nothing.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you made Thomas Aquinas known for his holiness and learning, please help us to grow in wisdom by his teaching, and in holiness by imitating his faith. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.





Born near Castelnuovo in the diocese of Turin in 1815. His early years were hard, so after ordination, he dedicated himself to the education of the young, founding congregations which would teach the arts and Christian life. He composed religious pamphlets. Died in 1888.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. John Bosco*

First of all, if we want to appear concerned about the true happiness of our foster children, and if we would move them to fulfill their duties, you must never forget that you are taking the place of the parents of these beloved young people. I have always worked lovingly for them and carried out my priestly duties with zeal. And the whole Salesian society has done this with me.

My sons, in my long experience, very often I had to be convinced of this great truth: It is easier to become angry than to restrain oneself, and to threaten a boy than to persuade him. Yes, indeed, it is more fitting to be persistent in punishing our own impatience and pride than to correct the boys. We must be firm but kind, and be patient with them.

I give you as a model the charity of Paul which he showed to his new converts. They often reduced him to tears and entreaties when he found them lacking docility and even opposing his loving efforts.

See that no one finds you motivated by impetuosity or willfulness. It is difficult to keep calm when administering punishment, but this must be done if we are to keep ourselves from showing off our authority or spilling out our anger.

Let us regard those boys over whom we have some authority as our own sons. Let us place ourselves in their service. Let us be ashamed to assume an attitude of superiority. Let us not rule over them except for the purpose of serving them better.

This was the method that Jesus used with the Emissaries. He put up with their ignorance and roughness and even their infidelity. He treated sinners with a kindness and affection that caused some to be shocked, others to be scandalized, and still others to hope for God's mercy. And

so he bade us to be gentle and humble of heart.

They are our sons, and so in correcting their mistakes we must lay aside all anger and restrain it so firmly that it is extinguished entirely. There must be no hostility in our minds, no contempt in our eyes, no insult on our lips. We must use mercy for the present and have hope for the future, as is fitting for true fathers who are eager for real correction and improvement.

In serious matters, it is better to beg God humbly than to send forth a flood of words that will only offend the listeners and have no effect on those who are guilty.

The people brought children to Jesus for him to touch, but the students tried to discourage this. Jesus saw it and said, "Let the children come to me and do not keep them away; because God's Kingdom belongs to people like them.

"A person who accepts a child like this in my name, is accepting me. Let the children come to me and do not keep them away; because God's Kingdom belongs to people like them."

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you called John Bosco to be a teacher and father to the young, please fill us with love like his; may we give ourselves completely to your service and to the rescue of mankind. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

February 2  
**The MASTER'S**  
**PRESENTATION**

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Sophronius*

In honor of the divine mystery that we are celebrating today, let us all hurry to meet the Prince; everyone should be eager to join the

procession and carry a light.

Our lighted candles are a sign of the divine splendor of the one who comes to drive out the dark shadows of evil and to make the whole universe radiant with the brilliance of his eternal light. Our candles also show how bright our souls should be when we go to meet the Prince.

The Mother of God, the totally pure Virgin, carried the real light in her arms and brought him to those who lived in darkness; and we should also carry a light for everyone to see, and should reflect the radiance of the real light as we hurry to meet him.

The light has come and shone on a world covered in shadows; the Dawn from above has visited us and given a light to those who lived in darkness. This, then, is our feast, and we join in procession with lighted candles to reveal the light that has shone on us and the glory that is still to come to us through him; so let us hurry all together to meet our God.

The real light has come, “the light that shines on every person who is born into this world.” All of us, my brothers and sisters, should be illuminated and made radiant by this light; all of us should share in its splendor, and be so filled with it that no one stays in darkness. Let us be shining ourselves as we go together to meet and to receive with the aged Simeon the light whose brilliance is eternal. And with Simeon’s joy, let us sing a hymn of gratitude to God, the Father of the light, who sent this real light to drive away the darkness and give us all a share in his splendor.

We too have seen through Simeon’s eyes the rescue God prepared for all the nations and revealed as the glory of the new Israel, which is ourselves. And just as Simeon was released from the bonds of this life when he had seen the Prince, we too were freed from our old state of sinfulness.

We embraced also, by faith, the Prince, the rescue of God the Father, as he came to us from Bethlehem. Though we were Gentiles previously, we have now become the People of God; our eyes have seen God incarnated, and because we have seen him present among us and have mentally received him into our arms, we are called the new Israel. Never will we forget this presence; every year we keep a feast in its honor.

The radiance of the Master entered the Temple by the eastern gate, and God’s house was filled with his splendor.

His parents took the child Jesus into the Temple, and God's house was filled with his splendor.

Prayer

Omnipotent Father, since your Son the Prince became man for us and was presented in the Temple, may he please free our hearts from sin and bring us into your presence. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil from the Virgin's womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.

And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.



Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia during the fourth century. His cult spread through the entire Church in the Middle Ages, and he is known to be a healer of diseases of the throat.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

“The Son of Man has come to serve, not to be served, and to give his own life as a ransom for many, many others.” Consider how the Master served, and see what kind of servants he asks us to be. He “gave his own life as a ransom for many, many others”; he ransomed us.

But which of us is good enough to ransom anyone? By his blood, by his death, we were ransomed from death; and we, who were lying flat on the ground, were brought to our feet by his humiliation. And yet we too have a duty to contribute our paltry offerings to the cells in his body, because we have become cells in his body. He is the head, and we are the body.

In his letter, the Emissary John holds up the Master as our model. Jesus said, “If anyone wants to be greater among you, he will be your

slave, just as the Son of Man has come to serve and not be served and to give his life as a ransom for many, many others.” So in his urging us to act in the same way, John says, “The Prince gave up his life for us; and so we should also give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.”

After his return to life, the Master asked, “Rock, do you love me?” And the Rock answered, “I do love you.” The question and the answer were repeated three times, and each time, the Master added, “Feed my sheep.” In other words, if you want to show your love for me, “feed my sheep.” What will you give me if you love me, since you look for everything to come from me? Now you know what you are to do if you love me: “Feed my sheep.”

And so we have the same question and answer once, twice, three times: “Do you love me? I do love you. Feed my sheep.” Three times the Rock repudiated Jesus out of fear; three times he acknowledged him out of love. By his replies and profession of love, the Rock condemned and erased his earlier fear; and so the Master, after entrusting his sheep to him for the third time, immediately added, “When you were a young man, you would tie your belt on and go wherever you pleased. But when you are old, someone else will tie you up and take you where you do not want to go. He said this indicating the kind of death he was to undergo to give glory to God.” And so he foretold the Rock’s own suffering and crucifixion; and the Master suggested by this that “feed my sheep” meant suffer for my sheep.

Nothing can embarrass me; I have complete confidence in the Prince that through my life or through my death he will use my mortal body for his glory.

Contempt has broken my heart and all my strength has gone; I have complete confidence in the Prince that through my life or through my death he will use my mortal body for his glory.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, please listen to the prayers of your martyr Blase, and give us the joy of your peace in this life and help us to gain the happiness that will never end. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in France at the beginning of the ninth century and educated in the monastery of Corbie. In 826, he preached in Denmark with little success, but later did better in Sweden. Appointed Bishop of Hamburg by Pope Gregory IV, he was sent as a legate to Denmark and Sweden, where he overcame many difficulties in preaching the Good News. Died in 865.

*Fourth Reading*

*Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church  
by the Second Vatican Council*

Every student of the Prince is responsible in his own degree for the spread of the faith, but the Prince the Master as always calling from among his followers those whom he wishes, so that they will be with him and sent by him to preach to the nations.

Through the Holy Spirit, who distributes gifts as he pleases for the good of everyone, the Prince implants in the hearts of individuals the vocation to be a missionary, and at the same time, he establishes in the Church institutes which make their own the task of spreading the report of the Good News that belongs to the whole Church.

A special vocation marks out those priests, religious, and lay people who are prepared to undertake the missionary task in their own country or abroad, and have the right natural disposition for it, with suitable gifts and talents. Sent by lawful authority, they go out in obedience and faith to those who are far from the Prince. They have been set apart for the task to which they have been called as servants of the Good News, "to make the Gentiles an acceptable offering, sanctified in the Holy Spirit."

Those whom God calls must answer his call in such a way that, without regard for purely human advice, they will devote themselves wholly to the work of the Good News. This response cannot be given except with the inspiration and strength of the Holy Spirit.

The person who is sent enters the life and mission of the one who “emptied himself, and took on the nature of a slave.” He must be ready, therefore, to be true to his vocation for life, to repudiate himself and renounce all that he had before, and to become everything to everyone.

In preaching the Good News to the nations, he must boldly proclaim the mystery of the Prince, whose ambassador he is, so that in the Prince he will have the courage to speak as he should and not be embarrassed by the stigma of the cross. He must follow in the footsteps of his Master, who was gentle and humble of heart, and reveal to others that his saddle does not chafe and that his burden is light.

By a life that is really consistent with the Good News, by a great deal of perseverance, by forbearance, kindness, and sincere love, he must act as a witness to his Master, even, if need be, by the shedding of his blood.

He will pray to God for strength and courage, so that he will come to see that for one who experiences great hardship and extreme poverty, there can be abundant joy.

I do not take pride in reporting the Good News, since it is a duty that I have had imposed on me. I would be completely miserable if I did not report the Good News.

I have been everything to everyone, in the hope of saving at least some. I would be completely miserable if I did not report the Good News.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you sent St. Ansgar to bring the light of the Prince to many nations, may his prayers help us to walk in the light of your truth. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.





Suffered martyrdom in Catania in Sicily during the persecution of Decius, around 250.

*Third Reading      A Homily on St. Agatha by St. Methodius of Sicily*

My fellow Christians, our annual celebration of a martyr's feast has brought us together. She achieved renown in the early Church for her noble victory; she is well known now as well, because she continues to triumph through her divine miracles, which occur every day and keep bringing glory to her name.

She is a true virgin, because she was born from the divine Word, God's only Son, who also underwent death for our sake. John, a master of God's utterances, speaks of this: "He gave the power to become children of God to those who accepted him."

The woman who invites us to this banquet is both a wife and a virgin. To use the analogy of Paul, she is the bride who has been engaged to one husband, the Prince. As a true virgin, she wore the glow of a pure conscience and the crimson of the Lamb's blood for her cosmetics; again and again she meditated on the death of her earnest lover. For her, the Prince's death was recent, his blood was still moist. Her robe is the mark of her faithful testimony to the Prince, since it bears the indelible stains of his crimson blood and the shining threads of her eloquence; she offers to everyone who comes after her these treasures of her well-spoken confession.

Agatha, the name of our saint, means "good." She was really good, because she lived as a child of God. She was also given as the gift of God, the source of all goodness to her bridegroom, the Prince, and to us. And so she grants us a share in her goodness. What can give greater goodness than the Supreme Goodness? Who could anyone find more deserving of celebration with hymns of praise than Agatha?

In Agatha, her goodness coincides with her name and her way of life. She won a good name by her noble deeds, and by her name she points to the nobility of those deeds. In Agatha, her mere name wins everyone

over to her companionship; she teaches them by her example to hurry along with her to true Goodness, God alone.

But in my case, since I am helped by the Master, I will stand firm in proclaiming his praises. He has become my rescue and my comfort.

In his mercy, the sinless Master has consecrated his servant, because she remained pure in his sight. He has become my rescue and my comfort.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, please have your forgiveness be won for us by the pleading of St. Agatha, who found favor with you by her chastity and by her courage in suffering death for the Good News. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

February 6  
 Paul   
 and  Agatha  
 and  Companions  
 Martyrs

St. Paul was born in Japan between 1564 and 1566; he entered the Jesuits and preached the Good News to the people with great success. But when the persecution against Catholics raged, he was arrested with 15 others, taken to Nagasaki and was crucified in 1597 on the vigil of this day.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *An Account of the Martyrdom of St. Paul Miki by a contemporary*

The crosses were set in place. Father Pasio and Father Rodriguez took turns encouraging the victims. Their steadfast behavior was wonderful to see. The Father Bursar stood motionless, his eyes turned heavenward. Brother Martin expressed gratitude for God's goodness by singing psalms. Again and again, he repeated, "I entrust my life into your

## FEBRUARY 6: PAUL MIKI AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS 63

hands, Master.” Brother Francis Branco also thanked God in a loud voice. Brother Gonsalvo in a very loud voice kept saying the Our Father and the Hail Mary.

Our brother, Paul Miki, saw himself standing now in the noblest pulpit he had ever filled. To his “congregation” he began by proclaiming himself a Japanese and a Jesuit. He was dying for the Good News he preached. He thanked God for this wonderful blessing and ended his “sermon” with these words: “As I come to this supreme moment of my life, I am sure none of you would suppose I want to deceive you. And so I tell you plainly: There is no way to be saved except the Christian way. My religion teaches me to pardon my enemies and everyone who has offended me. I do gladly pardon the Emperor and everyone who has tried to have me killed. I beg them to seek the Baptismal bath and be Christians themselves.”

Then he looked at his comrades and began to encourage them in their final struggle. Joy glowed in all their faces, and in Louis’ most of all. When a Christian in the crowd cried out to him that he would soon be in heaven, his hands, his whole body strained upward with such joy that every eye was fixed on him.

Anthony, hanging at Louis’ side, looked toward heaven and called upon holy names: “Jesus! Mary!” He began to sing a psalm: “Praise the Master, children!” (He learned this in catechism class in Nagasaki. They take care there to teach the children some psalms to help them learn their catechism.)

Others kept repeating, “Jesus! Mary!” Their faces were serene. Some of them even took to urging the people standing by to live worthy Christian lives. In these and other ways, they showed their readiness to die.

Then, as was the Japanese custom, the four executioners began to unsheathe their spears. At this dreadful sight, all the Christians cried out, “Jesus! Mary!” And the storm of anguished weeping then rose to batter the very skies. The executioners killed them one by one. One thrust of the spear, then a second blow. It was over in a very short time.

We must take pride in the cross of our Master Prince Jesus; in him is our rescue, our life, and our return to life; through him we are saved and set free.

This gift has been given to you, not only to believe in the Prince, but to suffer for his sake too; through him we are saved and set free.

**Prayer**

Dear God, our Father, source of strength for all your saints, since you led Paul Miki and his companions through the suffering of the cross to the joy of eternal life, may their prayers give us the courage to be loyal to death in professing our faith. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Venice in 1486. He was a soldier, but later dedicated himself to helping the poor, and gave them all he had. He founded the Order of Clerks Regular of Somascha, which supported orphan boys and the poor. Died in Somascha in the Bergamese District in 1537

*Third Reading*

*A Letter to his Brothers by St. Jerome Emiliani*

Sons of the Servants of the Poor and dear brothers in the Prince whom I love, greetings from your poor father.

I urge you please to persevere in your love for the Prince and your faithful observance of the Prince's law. In what I said and did I set an example for you when I was with you; and so the Master's reputation is enhanced in you through me.

Our goal is God, the source of everything good. As we say in our prayer, we are to place our trust in God and in no one else. In his kindness, our Master wished to strengthen your faith, because without it, as the evangelist points out, the Prince could not have performed many of his miracles. He also wished to listen to your prayer, and so he brought it about that you experience poverty, hardship, abandonment, weariness, and universal scorn. It was also his desire to deprive you of my physical presence, even though I am with you in spirit as your poor, dear, beloved father.

God alone knows the reasons for all this, yet we can recognize three causes: In the first place, our blessed Master is telling you that he wishes to include you among the sons he loves, provided you remain steadfast in his ways, because this is the way he treats his friends and makes them holy.

The second reason is that he is asking you to grow continually in your confidence in him alone and not in others. Because God, as I said before, does not work in those who refuse to place all their confidence and hope in him alone; but he does impart the fullness of his love upon those who possess a deep faith and hope; for them he does great things. So if you have been endowed with faith and hope, he will do great things for you; he will lift up those who are down. In depriving you of myself and everyone else you have loved, he will offer you an opportunity to choose one of these alternatives: either you will forsake your faith and return to the ways of the world, or you will remain steadfast in your faith and pass the test.

But there is a third reason. God wishes to test you like gold in the furnace. The dross is consumed by the fire, but the pure gold remains and its value increases. It is in this way that God acts with his good servant, who puts his hope in him and remains unshaken in times of distress. God lifts him up and, in return for the things he has left out of love for God, he repays him a hundred times over in this life and with eternal life afterwards.

This is the way God has dealt with all his saints. So it was with his people Israel after their period of trial in Egypt. He not only led them out of Egypt with many miracles and fed them with manna in the desert, he also gave them the promised land. If, then, you remain constant in faith in the face of trial, the Master will give you peace and rest for a time in this world, and for ever in the next.

Be of one heart and soul; be sympathetic, and love the brothers; have sympathy for everyone and be self-effacing. You are called to this way of life so that you will inherit a blessing.

Love each other in the way real brothers should, and always respect each other. Serve the Master and never grow tired; keep your spirit alive and willing. You are called to this way of life so that you will inherit a blessing.

## Prayer

Dear God of mercy, since you chose Jerome Emiliani to be a father and friend of orphans, may his prayers keep us faithful to the Spirit we have received, who makes us your children. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

February 10  
cholastica  
 Virgin

Sister of St. Benedict, born in Nursia, Italy about 480. She vowed herself to God and followed her brother to Monte Cassino, where she died around 547.

*Third Reading**Books of Dialogues by St. Gregory the Great*

Scholastica, the sister of St. Benedict, had been consecrated to God from her earliest years. She used to visit her brother once a year; he would come down to meet her at a place on the monastery property, not far outside the gate.

One day, she came as usual and her saintly brother went with some of his students; they spent the whole day praising God and talking of sacred things. As night fell, they had dinner together.

Their spiritual conversation went on and the hour grew late. The holy nun said to her brother, "Please do not leave me tonight; let us go on until morning talking about the delights of the spiritual life." "Sister," he replied, "What are you saying? I simply cannot stay outside my cell."

When she heard her brother refuse her request, the holy woman joined her hands on the table, laid her head on them, and began to pray. As she raised her head from the table, there were such brilliant flashes of lightning, such great peals of thunder, and such a heavy downpour of rain that neither Benedict nor his brothers could stir across the threshold of the place where they had been seated. Sadly, he began to complain, "May God forgive you, sister. What have you done?" "Well," she answered, "I asked you and you would not listen; so I asked my God and

he did listen. So now go off, if you can, leave me, and return to your monastery.”

Reluctant as he was to stay of his own will, he remained against his will. So it came about that they stayed awake the whole night, engrossed in their conversation about the spiritual life.

It is not surprising that she was more effective than he; since, as John says, “God is love,” it was absolutely right that she could do more, since she loved more.

Three days later, Benedict was in his cell. Looking up to the sky, he saw his sister’s soul leave her body in the form of a dove, and fly up to the secret places of heaven. Rejoicing in her great glory, he thanked the omnipotent God with hymns and words of praise. He then sent his brothers to bring her body to the monastery and lay it in the tomb he had prepared for himself.

Their minds had always been united in God; their bodies were to share a common grave.

When the saintly nun begged the Master for her brother not to leave her, she received more than her brother did from the Master of her heart because she loved him so much.

How good, how pleasant it is for brothers and sister to live in unity. She receive more than her brother did from the Master of her heart because she loved him so much.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, as we recall the memory of St. Scholastica, we ask that by her example we will be able to serve you with love and gain perfect joy. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



February 11  
OUR Lady  
OF LOURDES

In 1858, the Immaculate Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous near Lourdes in France within the cave of Massabielle. Through this humble girl, Mary called sinners to conversion and enkindled within the Church a great zeal for prayer and charity, especially service to the sick and poor.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Marie Bernadette Subirous*

I had gone down one day with two other girls to the bank of the river Gave when suddenly I heard a kind of rustling sound. I turned my head toward the field by the side of the river, but the trees seemed quite still and the noise was evidently not from them. Then I looked up and caught sight of the cave, where I saw a lady wearing a lovely white dress with a bright belt. On top of each of her feet was a pale yellow rose, the same color as her rosary beads.

At this, I rubbed my eyes, thinking I was seeing things, and I put my hands into the fold of my dress where my rosary was. I wanted to make the sign of the cross, but for the life of me I couldn't manage it, and my hand just fell down. Then the lady made the sign of the cross herself, and at the second attempt, I managed to do the same, though my hands were trembling. Then I began to say the rosary while the lady let her beads slip through her fingers, without moving her lips. When I stopped saying the Hail Mary, she immediately vanished.

I asked my two companions if they had noticed anything, but they said no. Of course they wanted to know what I was doing, and I told them that I had seen a lady wearing a nice white dress, though I didn't know who she was. I told them not to say anything about it, and they said I was silly to have anything to do with it. I said they were wrong, and I came back next Sunday, feeling myself drawn to the place. . . .

The third time I went, the lady spoke to me and asked me to come every day for fifteen days. I said I would, and then she said that she wanted me to tell the priests to build a chapel there. She also told me to drink from the stream. I went to the Gave, the only stream I could see.



## February 14: Cyril and Methodius, Monk and Bishop

Then she made me realize she was not speaking of the Gave, and she indicated a little trickle of water close by. When I got to it, I could only find a few drops, mostly mud. I cupped my hands to catch some liquid without success, and then I started to scrape the ground. I managed to find a few drops of water, but only at the fourth attempt was there enough for any kind of drink. Then lady then vanished, and I went back home.

I went back each day for fifteen days, and each time, except one Monday and one Friday, the lady appeared and told me to look for a stream and wash in it, and to see that the priests built a chapel there. I must also pray, she said, for the conversion of sinners. I asked her many times what she meant by that, but she only smiled. Finally, with outstretched arms and eyes looking up to heaven, she told me she was the Immaculate Conception.

During the fifteen days, she told me three secrets; but I was not to speak about them to anyone, and so far I have not.

My soul is full of the Master's magnificence. The one who is omnipotent, the one whose very name is holy, has done marvels for me.

From this day on every generation will admire me. The one who is omnipotent, the one whose very name is holy, has done marvels for me.

### Prayer

Dear God of mercy, since we are celebrating the feast of Mary, the sinless mother of God, may her prayers help us rise above our human weakness. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## February 14 Cyril and Methodius Monk and Bishop

St. Cyril was born in the ninth century in Thessalonica and educated in Constantinople. He went with his brother Methodius to Moravia to

preach the faith; both prepared Slavic liturgical texts in the Cyrillic alphabet. Both were summoned to Rome, where Cyril died on February 14, 869, while Methodius was consecrated bishop and went to Pannonia, where he tirelessly preached the Good News. Died on April 6, 885 in Velehrad, Czechoslovakia.

*Third Reading*

*Old Slavonic Life of Constantine*

Constantine, already burdened with many hardships, became ill. At one point during his extended illness, he experienced a vision of God, and began to sing this verse: “My spirit was overjoyed and my heart full of happiness because they told me we will go to the Master’s house.”

Afterward, he remained dressed in the vestments that were to be venerated later, and was full of joy for an entire day. He said, “From now on, I am not the servant of the Emperor or any man on earth, but of God alone. Before, I was dead; now I am alive, and I will live forever. Amen.”

The following day, he took the monastic habit and the religious name Cyril, and lived the life of a monk for fifty days.

When the time came for him to set out from this world to the peace of his heavenly home, he prayed to God with his hands outstretched and his eyes filled with tears, “My Master, my God, you have created the choirs of angels and spiritual powers; you have stretched out the heavens and set up the earth, and created all that exists from nothing. You hear those who obey your will and keep your commands in holy fear. Please listen to my prayer and protect your faithful people, because you have appointed me to be their unfit, undeserving servant.

“Please keep them free from harm and the worldly cunning of those who blaspheme you. Please build up your Church and gather everyone into unity. Please make your people known for the unity and profession of their faith; inspire the hearts of your people with your utterances and your teaching. You called us to preach the Good News about your Prince, and to encourage them to lives and deeds pleasing to you.

“I now return to you your people, your gift to me. Please direct them with your powerful right hand, and protect them under the shadow of your wings. May everyone praise and glorify your name, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Once he had exchanged the gift of peace with everyone, he said, “Blessed be God, who did not hand us over to our invisible enemy and

freed us from his snare and saved us from destruction.” He then fell asleep in the Master at the age of forty-two.

The Patriarch commanded all those in Rome, both the Greeks and the Romans, to gather for his funeral. They were to chant together over him and carry candles; they were to celebrate his funeral as if he had been a pope. This they did.

You spoke to your sacred people and told them, “I have elevated one chosen from the people; I have found my servant David. I have anointed him with my holy oil; the power of my hand will be with him.

I will give you shepherds after my own heart; they will nourish you on knowledge and understanding. I have anointed him with my holy oil; the power of my hand will be with him.

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since you brought the light of the Good News to the Slavic nations through St. Cyril and his brother St. Methodius, please open our hearts to understand your teaching and help us to become one in faith and praise. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

FEBRUARY 17  
The Seven Founders  
of the ORDER OF SERVITES  
Religious

Seven men born in Florence began a life on Monte Senario with special veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They preached through Tuscany and founded the Order of Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary, approved in 1304. Alexis Falconieri, one of the seven, died on this day in 1310.

*Third Reading*

*An Account of the Origin of the Servites*

There were seven men, deserving of all our praise and respect, whom our Lady brought into one community to form this order of hers and of her servants. They were like seven stars joined to form a constellation.

When I entered this order, I found only one of the seven still alive,

Brother Alexis, whom our Lady was pleased to preserve from death down to our own time, so that we could listen to his report of the founding of the order. As I saw for myself and observed at first hand, Brother Alexis led so good a life that everyone who met him was moved by the force of his example. In addition, he was a living testimony to that special kind of religious perfection characteristic of that first community.

But where did these men stand before they formed their own community? Let us consider this in four ways:

First, as regards the Church, some of them had never married, and vowed themselves to perpetual celibacy; some were married men at the time; some had lost their wives after marriage and were now widowers.

Second, as to their status in the city of Florence, they belonged to the merchant class, and engaged in buying and selling the goods of this world; but once they found the precious pearl, our order, they not only gave all they had to the poor, but cheerfully offered themselves to God and our Lady in true and loyal service.

Third, as to their devotion and reverence for our Lady, in Florence there was an ancient guild dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. Because of its age and the number and holiness of its members, both men and women, the guild had acquired preeminent status and was called the Major Guild of Our Blessed Lady. These seven men were devoted to our Lady and belonged to this guild before they established their own community.

Fourth, as to their spiritual perfection, they loved God above everything and dedicated their whole lives to him by honoring him in their every thought, word, and deed.

But when by God's inspiration and the special urging of our Lady they had definitely decided to form a community together, they put in order everything that dealt with their homes and families, left to their families what they needed, and gave all the rest to the poor. Then they sought the advice of virtuous men of good judgment, and described their plans to them.

They climbed the heights of Monte Senario, and built on its summit a little house that would suit their purpose, and lived there in common. As time passed, they began to realize that they were called not simply to sanctify themselves, but to receive others into their community, and so to increase the membership of this new order our Lady had inspired them to found. They recruited new members, and accepted some; and

## FEBRUARY 21: PETER DAMIAN, BISHOP, DOCTOR 77

in this way they established our present order. In the beginning, our Lady was the chief architect of this new order, which was founded on the humility of its members, built up by their mutual love, and preserved by their poverty.

The community of believers was of one heart, and one mind; no one claimed as his own anything he possessed; everything was held in common.

They took their food with joy, in simplicity of heart; they praised God and were respected by everyone; no one claimed as his own anything he possessed; everything was held in common.

### Prayer

Dear Master, please fill us with the love which inspired the seven holy brothers to honor the mother of God with special devotion and to lead your people to you. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Ravenna in 1007. He left teaching to enter the hermitage of Fonte Avellana, where as prior, he promoted the religious life with such fervor that all of Italy was affected by his renewal. He helped the popes in troubled times through writings and various missions on behalf of Church reform. He was created bishop and cardinal of Ostia by Pope Stephen IX. Died in 1072.

### *Third Reading*

### *A Letter by St. Peter Damian*

You asked me to write you a few words of encouragement, my brother, since you are looking for some comfort for your soul in your bitterness at so much hardship; and you asked me for some suggestions that would soothe you.

But there is no need for me to write. Comfort is already within your

reach, if your good sense has not been dulled. "My son, come to the service of God. Stand firm in virtue and fear. Prepare your soul; it is about to be tested." These words of Scripture show that you are a son of God, and, as such, should take possession of your inheritance. What could be clearer than this advice? Where there is virtue as well as fear, hardship will, of course test the spirit; but it is not the torment of a slave; it is the training of a child by a parent.

Even in the throes of his many sufferings, the holy man Job could say, "Whip me! Crush me! Cut me in slices!" But he would always add, "This at least would bring me relief; yet my oppressor does not spare me."

But for the ones God has chosen, there is a great comfort: the torment only lasts a short time. Then God bends down, cradles the fallen figure, and whispers words of consolation. The man picks himself up with hope in his heart, and walks again toward the glory of happiness in heaven.

Craftsmen show this same procedure. A smith beats out dross by hammering gold; a sculptor files metal to reveal a shining vein underneath. "The potter's furnace puts his pottery to the test; and the fire of suffering tests the mettle of virtuous men." The Emissary James echoes this thought: "Think of it as a great joy, dear brothers and sisters, when you stumble onto many kinds of hardships and reverses."

When people suffer pain for the wrongs they have perpetrated in life, they should take some comfort; they know too that undying rewards are waiting for them in the life to come because of their good deeds.

And so, my brother, though you are sneered at by men and seem to be whipped by God, do not despair; do not be depressed. Do not let your weakness make you impatient. No, let the serenity of your spirit shine through your face; let the joy of your mind break out; let words of gratitude spring from your lips.

The way that God deals with the human race can only be praised; he lashes people in this life to shield them from the eternal lash in the next. He pins people down now; but he will lift them up later; he cuts them before healing them; he throws them down to raise them once again.

The Scriptures give us reassurance, so have your understanding strengthen your patience. Look forward in serenity to the joy that follows sadness; hope leads you to that joy, and love kindles your zeal. A well-

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prepared mind forgets the suffering inflicted from outside and glides easily to what it has contemplated within itself.

It is a blessing for a man to be found without fault, and not to make gold the object of his life or put his trust in wealth. His future will be secure with the Master.

He was able to sin, but did not; he was able to do wrong, but would not. His future will be secure with the Master.

### Prayer

Omnipotent God, please help us follow the teachings and example of Peter Damian, and by making the Prince and the service of the Church the first love of our lives, may we come to the joys of eternal light. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## February 22 The Throne of Peter Emissary

Since the fourth century, the feast of the Throne of Peter has been celebrated at Rome as a sign of the unity of the Church.

### *Third Reading*

### *A Sermon by St. Leo the Great*

Out of the whole world, one man, the Rock, is chosen to preside at the assembly of all the nations, and to be set over all the Emissaries and all the fathers of the Church. Though there are in God's people many bishops and many shepherds, the Rock is in this way appointed to rule in his own person those whom the Prince also rules as the original ruler.

My friends, how great and wonderful is this sharing in his power that God in his goodness has given to this man. Whatever the Prince willed to be shared together by the Rock and the other leaders of the Church, it is only through the Rock he has given to others what he has not

refused to bestow on them.

The Master now asks the Emissaries as a whole what men think of him; and as long as they are relating the uncertainty born of human ignorance, their reply is always the same. But when he presses the students to say what they think themselves, the first to acknowledge his faith in the Master is the one who is first in rank among the Emissaries.

The Rock says, "You are the Prince, the Son of the living God." Jesus replies, "Good for you, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you; it was my Father who is in heaven!" It is your blessing, he means, because my Father has taught you. You have not been deceived by earthly opinion; you have been illuminated by inspiration from heaven. It was not flesh and blood that pointed me out to you; it was the one whose only Son I am.

He continues, "And I tell you." In other words, since my Father has revealed my godhead to you, I will in my turn make known your preeminence. "You are Rock." Though I am the inviolable rock, "the cornerstone that makes both one thing," the foundation apart from which no one can lay any other, you are still a rock also, because you are given solidity by my strength, so that what is my very own because of my power is shared between us through your participation.

"And on this rock I will build my community, and the gates of the world below will not win out over it." I will build an everlasting temple on this strong foundation, he says. The great height of my Church, which is to penetrate the sky, will rise on the firm foundation of this faith.

The gates of the world below will not silence this profession of faith; the chains of death will not hold it bound. Its words are words of life; as they raise to heaven those who profess them, they also send down to hell those who contradict them.

The blessed Rock is therefore told, "I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven to you, and whatever you lock on earth will also be locked in heaven, and whatever you unlock on earth will also be unlocked in heaven." The authority vested in this power also passed to the other Emissaries, and the institution established by this decree has continued in all the leaders of the Church. But it is not without good reason that what is bestowed on all of them is entrusted to one; because the Rock received it separately in trust, because he is the prototype set



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before all the rulers of the Church.

Before I called you from the boat, I knew you, Simon Rock, and I have appointed you leader of my people. I have entrusted to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you lock on earth will be locked in heaven, and whatever you unlock on earth will be unlocked in heaven.


### Prayer

Omnipotent Father, since you have built your Church on the rock of St. Peter's confession of faith, may nothing divide or weaken our unity in faith and love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
"Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,

you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.

FEBRUARY 23  
OLYCARP  
 BISHOP, MARTYR

Polycarp was Bishop of Smyrna and a student of the Emissaries; he accompanied St. Ignatius of Antioch to Rome to confer with Pope Anicetus about the celebration of Easter. About 155 he suffered martyrdom by burning at the stake in the amphitheater of Smyrna.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter on the Martyrdom of St. Polycarp  
by the Church of Smyrna*

When the pyre was ready, Polycarp took off all his clothes and loosened his under-garment. He made an effort to remove his shoes also, though he was not used to doing this, since the faithful always competed with each other in their eagerness to touch his body. Even before his martyrdom, he had received every token of honor in tribute to the holiness of his life.

There and then the material for the pyre was piled round him. When they tried to nail him to it, he said, "Leave me as I am. The one who

gives me the strength to stand the fire will give me the strength to stand perfectly still on the pyre, even without the precaution of your nails.” So they did not nail him to the pyre and only tied him instead. And tied in this way, with his hands behind his back, he stood like a mighty ram, picked out for sacrifice from a huge flock, a fitting victim prepared to be offered to God.

As he looked up to heaven, he said, “Master, omnipotent God, Father of your beloved and blessed Son Prince Jesus, through whom we have come to the knowledge of yourself, God of angels, of powers, of all creation, of all the race of sacred people who live in your sight, I bless you for considering me fit for this day and this hour, so that in the company of martyrs I will share the cup of the Prince, your anointed one, and so rise again to eternal life in soul and body, and be immortal through the power of the Holy Spirit. May I be accepted among the martyrs into your presence today as a rich and pleasing sacrifice. God of truth, stranger to falsehood, you have prepared this and revealed it to me, and now you have fulfilled your promise.

“I praise you for everything; I bless you; I glorify you through the eternal priest of heaven, Prince Jesus, your beloved Son. Through him be glory to you, together with him and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.”

When he had said “Amen” and finished the prayer, the officials at the pyre lit it. But when a great flame burst out, those of us privileged to see it witnessed a strange and wonderful thing. In fact, we have been spared to tell the story to others. Like a ship’s sail swelling in the wind, the fame became something like a dome encircling the martyr’s body. Surrounded by the fire, his body was like bread that is baked, or gold and silver white-hot in a furnace, not like flesh that has been burnt. Such a sweet fragrance came to us that it was like that of burning incense or some other costly and sweet-smelling gum.

Write this to the angel of the Church in Smyrna: This is what is said by the Master, the First and the last, the one who was dead and is now alive: I know your suffering and your poverty, but you are rich. Be true to your faith until death, and I will give you the winner’s crown of life.

Do not be afraid of the suffering you will have to endure; the devil will send some of you to prison to be tested. Be true to your faith until

death, and I will give you the winner's crown of life.

**Prayer**

Dear God of all creation, since you gave your bishop Polycarp the privilege of being included among the saints who gave their lives in faithful witness to the Good News, may his prayers give us the courage to share the cup of suffering with him. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

MARCH 3

BL. **K**ATHARINE  **O**REXEL  
VIRGIN

Born in Philadelphia, on November 26, 1858, daughter of a banker; her mother died shortly after birth, and her father remarried. Katherine gave her fortune and life to serve the poor and oppressed, particularly blacks and Indians, among whom she helped finance many missions. In 1891, she founded a missionary community, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Died on March 3, 1955 and was beatified by Pope John Paul II on November 20, 1988.

*Third Reading*      *A Sermon on the Dress of Virgins by St. Cyprian*

I now wish to address the order of virgins. Because their way of life is higher, our concern for them must be greater; if we compare the Church to a tree, then they are the blossom. Virgins display the beauty of God's grace; they are the image of God that reflects the Master's holiness; they are the shining members of the Prince's flock; they are the glory of Mother Church, and show her fruitfulness; the more numerous her virgins are, the greater is her joy.

It is to these virgins, then, that I am speaking and directing my advice, out of love rather than any sense of authority; and I do this without claiming the right to find fault with them, because I am one of the most insignificant and lowest of all, and am fully aware of my unimportance. I am doing it because the more anxious and concerned I am about them, the more afraid I am of the devil's attack; and taking

thought for the path of rescue and keeping the Master's life-giving commandments is not an idle concern or empty fear.

They have dedicated themselves to the Prince, and in renouncing the pleasures of the flesh, have consecrated themselves body and soul to God, to finish a task that is destined to win a great reward; they should not make any effort to deck themselves out or give pleasure to anyone but the Master, from whom they hope to receive the reward for their chastity.

Please, my virgins, persevere in the way of life you have begun; persevere in what you are to be, because you will receive a glorious prize for your virtue, and a superb reward for your chastity. You have already begun to be what we will all be in the future. You already possess, here in this world, the glory of the resurrection; you are passing through this world without the world's infection. If you persevere in chastity and virginity, you are equal to God's angels; but only keep your profession of virginity strong and inviolate. You began your way of life courageously; now persevere without stumbling. Look for right conduct as your adornment, not jewelry or attractive clothes.

Listen to the voice of the Emissary Paul, God's chosen receptacle who was sent to announce heaven's commands. Paul said, "The first man was made from the dirt of the earth; the second is from heaven. Those who are made from dirt are like the one who was on the earth; those who are from heaven are like the one who is from heaven. In the same way as we carried the image of the man who is from the earth, we should now carry the image of the man who is from heaven." This image is displayed in virginity, purity, holiness, and truth.

The thoughts of a virgin are always on God; her desire is to be holy both in body and soul.

The God of my heart is my share forever; her desire is to be holy both in body and soul.

#### Prayer

Eternally loving God, since you called Blessed Katharine Drexel to teach the message of the Good News and to bring the life of the Eucharist to the black and Indian peoples, please enable us by her prayers and example to work for justice among the poor and oppressed, and keep us

undivided in love in the Eucharistic community of your Church. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in 1458, son of the King of Poland. He practiced Christian virtues with special regard to chastity and kindness to the poor, and was zealous in the faith, particularly in devotion to the Holy Eucharist and the Virgin Mary. Died of consumption in 1484.

*Third Reading*

*Life of Casimir by a Contemporary*

By the power of the Holy Spirit, Casimir was on fire with a sincere and unpretentious love for almighty God that was almost incredible in its strength. His love was so rich and so filled his heart that it flowed out from his inner spirit toward his fellow men. As a result, nothing was more pleasant or more desirable for him than to share his belongings and even give and dedicate his entire self to the Prince's poor, to foreigners, to the sick, to those in captivity, and to everyone who was suffering. To widows, orphans, and those in trouble, he was not only a guardian and patron but a father, son, and brother.

One would have to compose a long account to record here all his deeds of love and dedication to God and mankind. In fact, it is hard to express his passion for virtue, his exercise of moderation, his gift of prudence, and his fundamental spiritual courage and stability, especially in a very permissive age, when men tended to be headstrong and by their very natures inclined to sin.

He urged his father every day to practice justice throughout his kingdom and in the governance of his people; and whenever anything in the country had been overlooked because of human weakness or simple neglect, he never failed to point it out quietly to the king.

He actively took up the cause of the needy and unfortunate, and embraced it as his own; for this reason the people called him the patron

## MARCH 7: PERPETUA AND FELICITY, MARTYRS 87

of the poor. Though he was the son of a king and a descendant of noble ancestors, he was never unapproachable in his conversation or dealings with anyone, no matter how humble or obscure.

He always preferred to be included among the meek and poor of spirit, among those who are promised the Kingdom of Heaven, rather than among the famous and powerful men of this world. He had no ambition for the power that lies in human rank, and he would never accept it from his father. He was afraid that the barbs of wealth, which our Master Prince Jesus spoke of as thorns, would wound his soul, or that he would be contaminated by contact with worldly goods.

Many of those who acted as his personal servants or secretaries are still alive today; these men, of the highest integrity, who had personal knowledge of his private life, testify that he preserved his chastity to the very end of his life.

Invest your wealth as the Supreme Being commands; it will yield a far greater profit than gold.

Make an effort toward virtue, reverence, faith, and love; always exercise good judgment and be gentle; it will yield a far greater profit than gold.

### Prayer

Omnipotent God, since to serve you is to reign, please help us by the prayers of St. Casimir to serve you in holiness and virtue. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## MARCH 7 PERPETUA AND FELICITY MARTYRS

Suffered martyrdom in the persecution of Septimus Severus at Carthage in 203. An accurate account of their deaths still exists, partly from their own evidence and partly from a writer of the period.

*Third Reading      The Story of the Death of the Martyrs of Carthage*

The day of the martyrs' victory dawned. They marched from their cells into the amphitheater, as if they were going into heaven, with cheerful looks and graceful bearing. If they trembled, it was for joy and not fear.

Perpetua was the first to be thrown down, and she fell prostrate. She got up, and, seeing that Felicity was prostrate, went over and reached her hand down and lifted her up. Both stood up together. The hostility of the crowd was appeased, and they were ordered to the Sanavivaria Gate, where Perpetua was welcomed by a catechumen named Rusticus. She roused herself as if from sleep, she had been so deep in spiritual ecstasy, and began to look around, and to everyone's amazement, she said, "When are we going to be led to the animals?" When she heard that it had already happened, she did not at first believe it, until she saw the marks of violence on her body and clothing. Then she beckoned to her brother and the catechumen, and spoke to them in this way, "Stand firm in faith, love one another, and do not be tempted to do anything wrong because of our suffering."

Saturus too, in another gate, encouraged the soldier Pudens by saying, "Here I am, and just as I thought and foretold, I have not yet felt any wild animal. Now believe with your whole heart: I will go there and be killed by the leopard in one bite." And right at the end of the games, when he was thrown to the leopard, he was in fact covered with so much blood from one bite that the people called out to him, "Washed and saved! Washed and saved!" And so, with this evidence of a second Bath, the one who was washed in this way was clearly saved.

Then Saturus told the soldier Pudens, "Goodbye, and remember your faith as well as me; do not let this intimidate you; make it strengthen you." At the same time, he asked for the little ring from Pudens' finger, and after soaking it in his wound, he returned it to Pudens as a keepsake, leaving him a pledge and memento of his blood. Half dead, he was thrown along with the others to the usual place of slaughter.

The people, however, demanded to have the martyrs led into the middle of the amphitheater; they wanted to see the sword thrust into the bodies of the victims, so that their eyes could participate in the slaughter. Without being asked, the martyrs went where the people wanted them to go; but first they embraced one another, to complete their evidence



with the customary kiss of peace.

The others stood motionless and received the death-blow in silence, especially Satorus, who had gone up first and was first to die; he was helping Perpetua. But Perpetua, to experience the pain more deeply, with joy over her broken body guided the shaking hand of the inexperienced gladiator to her throat. Such a woman—one before whom the unclean spirit trembled—would perhaps not have been killed if she had not willed it herself.

You supremely brave martyrs, who received the supreme blessing, were called and chosen for the glory of our Master Prince Jesus.

Jesus the Prince is enthroned beside God, and pleads there on our behalf. What can separate us from the love of the Prince? Suffering? Hardship? Persecution? Hunger? Destitution? Danger? Weapons?

In all of these hardships, the victory is ours because of the Prince who loves us. What can separate us from the love of the Prince? Suffering? Hardship? Persecution? Hunger? Destitution? Danger? Weapons?

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since your love gave the Saints Perpetua and Felicity courage to suffer a barbaric martyrdom, please help us by their prayers to grow in love of you. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Portugal in 1495. After facing dangers in the military, he devoted himself entirely to the care of the sick. In founding a hospital in Granada, Spain, he selected assistants who later formed the Order of Hospitalers of John of God. He was most distinguished for his charity to the needy and sick. Died in Granada in 1550.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. John of God*

If we are looking to receive mercy from God, we can never fail to do good as long as we have the strength; because if we share what God has given us with the poor out of love of God, we will, as he promised, receive a hundred times as much in eternal happiness. What a wonderful return on investment! What a remarkable reward! Is there anyone who would not entrust what he owns to such an excellent merchant, who handles our affairs so well? He begs us with outstretched arms to turn toward him, to weep for our sins, and to become slaves to love, first for ourselves, and then for our neighbors. Love erases sin as surely as water puts out a fire.

So many poor people come here that I often wonder how we can care for them all, but Prince Jesus provides everything and feeds everyone. Many of them come to the house of God, because the city of Granada is large and very cold, especially now in winter. More than a hundred and ten are now living here, sick and healthy, servants and pilgrims.

Since this house is open to everyone, it receives the sick of every type and condition: the crippled, the disabled, lepers, mutes, the insane, paralyzed, those suffering from scurvy and those bearing the handicaps of old age, many children, and above all countless pilgrims and travelers, who come here, and for whom we furnish fire, water, and salt, as well as the utensils for cooking their food. And no payment is requested for all of this; and yet the Prince provides.

I work here on borrowed money, a prisoner for Prince Jesus. Often my debts are so pressing that I do not dare go out of the house for fear of being arrested by my creditors. Whenever I see so many poor brothers and neighbors of mine suffering beyond their strength and overwhelmed by so many physical or mental ailments that I cannot alleviate, then I become extremely sad; but I trust in the Prince, who knows my heart.

And so I say, "Woe to the man who trusts in men rather than in the Prince." Whether you like it or not, you will grow apart from men, but the Prince is faithful and always with you, because the Prince provides everything. Let us always thank him. Amen.

Share your bread with the hungry and destitute and take the poor and homeless into your house. Then your light will break out like dawn, and your holiness will precede you.

When you see a naked man, give him clothes, and do not sneer at your brother. Then your light will break out like dawn, and your holiness will precede you.

Prayer

Father, since you gave John of God love and pity for others, please bestow on us the favor that by doing good for others we will be included among the saints in your kingdom. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Rome in 1384; married young and had three sons. She gave her possessions to the poor and looked after the sick. She also cultivated the virtues of humility and patience. In 1425, she founded the Congregation of Oblates under the Rule of St. Benedict. She died in 1440.

*Third Reading*

*Life of St. Frances of Rome  
by Mary Magdalene Anguillaria*

God not only tested the patience of Frances in her material wealth, but as I have said before and will say again, he also tested her own body in a variety of ways, especially through long and serious illnesses which she had to undergo. Yet no one ever saw in her a tendency toward impatience. She never displayed any annoyance when she obeyed an order, no matter how foolish it was.

Through the premature deaths of her sons, whom she loved dearly, Frances proved her constancy. She always reconciled herself to the will of God with peace of soul, and thanked him for everything that happened. With the same constancy, she endured the slander of those who denigrated and sneered at her and her way of life. She did not show the least hint of antipathy toward them, even though she knew that they were prejudiced against her and what they said of her way of life was

false. Instead, she gave good in return for evil and it was her habit to pray to God for them.

God had not chosen her to be holy simply for her own sake; the gifts he bestowed on her were to be for the spiritual and physical advancement of her neighbors. This was why he made her so lovable that anyone she spoke to would immediately feel charmed by love for her and ready to help her in everything she wanted. Divine power was with her and working in what she said, so that in a few sentences she could bring comfort to those in trouble and full of worry, she could calm the restless, soothe the angry, reconcile enemies, and put out the fires of long-standing hatreds and bad blood. Again and again she would prevent a planned revenge from being carried out; she seemed able to subdue the passions of every type of person with a single word, and lead them to do whatever she asked.

This was why people flocked to Frances from everywhere, as if they were coming to a safe harbor. No one left her without being consoled, even when she openly reprimanded them for their sins and fearlessly took them to task for what was evil and displeasing to God.

There were many different diseases rampant in Rome; fatal illnesses and plagues were everywhere, but the saint ignored the risk of contagion and displayed the deepest kindness to the poor and the needy. Her sympathy would first induce them to atone for their sins; then she would help them by her zealous care, and urge them lovingly to accept their troubles, no matter how difficult they were, from the hand of God. She would encourage them to put up with their suffering for the love of the Prince, since he had first endured so much for them.

Frances was not satisfied with caring for the sick she could bring into her home, however. She would seek them out in their cottages and in the public hospitals, and would slake their thirst, smooth their beds, and bandage their sores. The more disgusting and sickening the odor, the greater was the love and care with which she treated them.

She used to go to the Campo Santo with food and rich delicacies to be distributed to those in need. On her return home, she would bring pieces of worn-out clothes and filthy rags, which she would wash lovingly and mend carefully, as if they were to be used for God himself. Then she would fold them neatly and scent them.

For thirty years Frances continued this service to the sick and to

foreigners. While she was in her husband's house, she made frequent visits to Saint Mary's and Saint Cecilia's hospitals in Trastevere, and to the Hospital of the Holy Spirit in Sassia and to a fourth hospital in Campo Santo. During epidemics such as this it was difficult to find not only doctors to care for the body, but priests to provide remedies for the soul. She would ferret them out herself and bring them to those who were disposed to receive the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist. And in order to have a priest more easily available to help her in her apostolate, she supported, at her own expense, a priest who would go to the hospitals and visit the sick whom she had pointed out.

May you be blessed by our God the Master, because all the people know you are a woman of virtue.

The Master has so glorified your name that your praise will never pass from the memory of man, because all the people know you are a woman of virtue.

#### Prayer

Merciful Father, since you have given us in Frances of Rome a unique example of love in marriage as well as in religious life, please keep us faithful in your service, and help us see and follow you in all the aspects of life. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Great Britain about 385. Captured and sold as a slave in Ireland as a young man, he tended sheep. After escaping, he became a priest and later as a bishop preached the Good News to the people of Ireland, where he converted many. Died at Down in 461.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *Confession of St. Patrick*

I am unceasingly grateful to my God, who kept me faithful in “the

day I was tested.” Today I can offer him sacrifice with confidence, and give myself as a “living victim” to my Master the Prince, “who kept me safe through all my troubles.” I can say now, “Who am I, Master” and what is my calling, that you worked through me with such divine power? You did all this so that today “among the Gentiles” I could be constantly “happy and glorify your name” wherever I might be, in prosperity as well as hardship. You did it so that, whatever happened to me, I would accept good and bad equally, and always thank God for them.

God showed me how to have faith in him forever, as in someone who is never to be doubted. He answered my prayer in such a way that “in the last days,” even though I am ignorant, I would be bold enough to take up such a holy, marvelous task, and imitate to some degree those whom the Master has do long ago foretold as heralds of his Good News, “as they gave their evidence to every nation.”

“How did I get this wisdom,” that was not mine previously? I did not know “how to make every day count,” or have knowledge of God. How did such a great, salutary gift come to me, the gift of knowing and loving God, even though it came at the cost of my home and family? I came to the Irish peoples to announce the Good News and endure the vilification of unbelievers, put up with sneers at my earthly pilgrimage, suffer many persecutions, “even bondage,” and lose my birthright of freedom for the benefit of others.

If I should have the privilege, “I am also ready” to give up “my life” without hesitation and with complete willingness, for his name. I want to “spend myself” in that country, “even in death,” if the Master grants me this favor. I am deeply in his debt, because he gave me the great grace that through me many people would be reborn in God, and then made complete by confirmation, and that everywhere among them clergy would be ordained for a people so recently coming to believe, one people gathered by the Master “from the ends of the earth.” As God had prophesied from ancient times through the prophets, “The nations will come to you from the ends of the earth, and say, ‘The idols made by our ancestors are such false things! They are useless!’” In another prophecy he said, “I have set you up as a light among the nations, to bring rescue to the ends of the earth.”

It is among that people that I want to “wait for the promise” made by the one who certainly never tells a lie. He makes this promise in the

## MARCH 18: CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, BISHOP DOCTOR

Good News: “They will come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” This is our faith: believers are to come from the whole world.

God has given me the grace to be a servant of Jesus the Prince among the Gentiles and to assume the priestly duty of reporting the Good News, so that the Gentiles will be received as an acceptable offering, consecrated by the Holy Spirit.

In my spirit, I serve the Father by reporting the Good News about his Son, so that the Gentiles will be received as an acceptable offering, consecrated by the Holy Spirit.

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you sent St. Patrick to announce your glory to the people of Ireland, may all Christians by the help of his prayers proclaim your love to every human being. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## MARCH 18 CYRIL OF JERUSALEM BISHOP DOCTOR

Born of Christian parents in 315. He succeeded Maximus as Bishop of Jerusalem in 348, and was involved in the dispute over Arianism and was exiled more than once. His *Catecheses*, in which he explained the true teachings of the faith and Scripture as well as the traditions of the Church, reveal his pastoral zeal. Died in 386.

### *Third Reading*      *Catechetical Instruction by St. Cyril of Jerusalem*

“The heavens should sing for joy and the earth celebrate!” The reason is that those who are about to be sprinkled by the sacred herb will be spiritually washed. The Prince’s power will purify them, because during his suffering, the herb touched his lips. The heavenly angels should celebrate this, and those who are about to be married to a spiritual husband should prepare themselves. “A voice is calling in the desert, ‘Make the Master’s path ready!’”

And so, children of virtue, follow John's advice, "Make the road straight for the Master." Remove all obstacles and objects to trip over, so that you will be able to go straight along the road to eternal life. Prepare yourselves through sincere faith, so that you will be free to receive the Holy Spirit. Begin to wash your clothes by your change of heart; and then when you are summoned to the bridegroom's bedchamber, you will be found spotless.

Heralds are proclaiming the groom's invitation; all mankind is being called to the wedding banquet, because he is a generous lover. Once the crowd has assembled, the groom decides who will enter the wedding feast—which is a symbol of the Bath. Give your name at the gate, and go in; and I hope that later none of you will hear the words, "Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?" All of you should hear "Well done, good and faithful slave; you have been faithful in insignificant things, and now I will put you in charge of a great deal. Enter your Master's happiness."

Up to this point in the history of the world's rescue, you have stood outside the gate; now I hope you will all hear the words, "The king has brought me into his chambers; my soul is bursting with joy in my God. He has dressed me in the clothing of rescue and the cloak of happiness; he has made me a bridegroom by placing a crown on my head; he has made me a bride by covering me with jewels and gold ornaments."

I do not say this so that your souls will be found without stain or wrinkle or any other defect. How could this be true of you before you have received this grace, since you are called to receive forgiveness for your sins. No, what I am asking is that once you have received this grace, you do nothing to deserve damnation; and even more, I am asking you to hurry toward the fulfillment of this grace.

My brothers and sisters, this is a truly great occasion; approach it with caution. You are standing before God and in the presence of armies of angels; the Holy Spirit is about to impress his seal on each of your souls. You are about to enlist in the service of a great King.

And so, prepare yourselves to receive the sacrament. The gleaming white clothes you are about to put on are not the preparation I am speaking of; I am referring to the devotion of a clean conscience.

True teaching was in his mouth, and no evil was ever found on his lips.



He walked with me in goodness and peace.

My hand will be a steady help to him; my arm will give him strength.  
He walked with me in goodness and peace.

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since through Cyril of Jerusalem you led your Church to a deeper understanding of the mysteries of our rescue, please have his prayers help us to know your Son better and to have eternal life in all its fullness. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Bernadine of Siena*

There is a general rule about all special graces bestowed on any human being: Whenever the divine favor chooses someone to receive a special grace or accept a very high vocation, God adorns the person with all the gifts of the Spirit needed to fulfill the task he receives.

This general rule is especially verified in the case of St. Joseph, the foster-father of our Master and the husband of the Queen of our world, who is enthroned above the angels. He was chosen by the eternal Father as the trustworthy guardian and protector of his greatest treasures, his divine Son and Mary, Joseph's wife. He carried out his vocation with complete fidelity until at last God called him and said, "Good and faithful slave, enter your Master's joy."

Then what is Joseph's position in the whole Church of the Prince? Is he not a man chosen and set apart? Through him and, yes, under him, the Prince was properly and honorably introduced to the world. Holy Church as a whole is indebted to the Virgin Mother because through her it was considered fit to receive the Prince; but after her, we undoubtedly owe special gratitude and reverence to St. Joseph.

In him, the Old Treaty finds its fitting close; he brought the noble

line of the Patriarchs and prophets to its promised fulfillment. What the divine goodness had offered as a promise to them, he held in his arms.

Obviously, the Prince does not now deny to Joseph that intimacy, reverence, and very high honor which he gave him on earth as a son to his father. No, we must say that in heaven, the Prince completes and brings to perfection everything he gave at Nazareth.

Now we can see how the last summoning words of the Master apply appropriately to St. Joseph: "Enter your Master's joy." In fact, though the joy of eternal happiness enters the soul of a man, the Master preferred to say to Joseph, "Enter joy." His intention was for the words to have a hidden spiritual meaning for us; they convey not only that this holy man possesses an inward joy, but that it surrounds him also, and engulfs him like an infinite abyss.

Please remember us, St. Joseph, and plead for us to your foster-child. Ask your supremely holy bride, the Virgin Mary, to look kindly on us, since she is the mother of the one who with the Father and the Holy Spirit is alive and reigning through all the endless ages. Amen.

God has made me a father to the king and master of all his household. He has lifted me up so that he could save many people.

The Master is my helper and protector; he is my savior. He has lifted me up so that he could save many people.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you entrusted our Savior to the care of St. Joseph, may your Church by the help of his prayers please continue to serve its Master, Prince Jesus, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim

cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

MARCH 23  
URIBIUS DE MONGROVEJO  
 Bishop

Born in Spain around 1538. He taught law at the University of Salamanca, and in 1580 was chosen Bishop of Lima and went to America. He called many councils and synods promoting reform of religion there. He defended the laws of the Church and visited his people frequently, devoting much time to the care of the Indians. Died in 1606

*Third Reading*

*Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops  
by the Second Vatican Council*

In exercising their duty of teaching, bishops are to proclaim the Good News of the Prince before men, a task that stands out among their principal duties. In the strength of the Spirit, they are to call people to faith, or confirm them in a living faith. They are to set before them the mystery of the Prince in its entirety: that is, those truths which are necessary in order to know the Prince, as well as the divinely revealed way of glorifying God and so attaining eternal happiness.

Moreover, they are to make it clear that earthly realities and human institutions are themselves directed, in the plan of God the Creator, toward man's rescue, and are thus able to make no small contribution to the building up of the body of the Prince.

They should therefore insist on the value placed by the Church's teaching on the human person, his freedom and also his physical life; on the family, its unity and stability, and the procreation and education of children; on civil society, with its laws and professions; on work and leisure, the arts and technological developments; on poverty and affluence. They should also set forth the principles for resolving the very serious problems relating to the possession, increase, and proper distribution of material goods, to peace and war, and to friendly relations among all peoples.

They should present Christian teaching in a way appropriate to the needs of the times; that is, in a way that meets the difficulties and problems that people today find a special burden and source of anxiety. They should also safeguard this teaching, instructing the faithful how to

## MARCH 23: TURIBIUS OF MONGROVEJO, BISHOP 101

defend it and propagate it themselves. In handing on this teaching, they should manifest the Church's motherly concern for everyone, believers and unbelievers alike. They should show a special concern for the poor and less fortunate, to whom the Master has sent them to preach the Good News.

In discharging their duty as father and shepherd, bishops should be among their people as those who serve, good shepherds who know their sheep and whose sheep know them. They should be outstanding in their spirit of love and concern for everyone, true fathers whose God-given authority everyone obeys with a joyful heart. They should unite and mold the entire family of their flock so that everyone is made aware of his responsibility and is able to live and work in loving communion with others.

To do this effectively, bishops should regulate their lives in keeping with the needs of the times, and so be "ready for every good work, and put up with everyone for the sake of God's chosen."

Be shepherds of God's flock; give them a good example, and when the chief shepherd appears, he will give you a crown of glory.

You must have at heart every member of the flock, because the Holy Spirit has made you their shepherds; you must rule over the Church of God. And when the chief shepherd appears, he will give you a crown of glory.

### Prayer

Dear Master, since you helped your Church to grow through the apostolic work of St. Turibius and his unwavering love of truth, may your chosen people please continue to grow in faith and holiness. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



MARCH 25

*Third Reading**A Letter by St. Leo the Great*

Insignificance receives its assurance by majesty, weakness by power, and mortality by eternity. To pay the debt of our sinful state, a nature that was incapable of suffering was joined to one that could suffer; and so, in keeping with the healing that we needed, one and the same liaison between God and men, the man Prince Jesus, was able to die in one nature, and unable to die in the other.

The one who is true God was therefore born in the complete and perfect nature of a true man, complete in his own nature and complete in ours. By our nature, we mean what the Creator had fashioned in us from the beginning, and took to himself to restore it. That is, in the Savior, there was no trace of what the deceiver had introduced and which man in his deception allowed to enter. It does not follow that because he submitted to sharing in our human weakness, he therefore shared in our sins.

He took the nature of a slave without stain of sin, and so enlarged our humanity without diminishing his divinity. He emptied himself; though he was invisible, he made himself visible; though he was Creator and Master of everything, he chose to be one of us mortal men. Yet this was the condescension of kindness, not the loss of omnipotence. So the one who, in the nature of God, had created man, became, in the nature of a slave, man himself.

Thus, the Son of God enters this base world. He comes down from the throne of heaven, yet does not separate himself from the Father's glory. He is born in a new condition, by a new birth.

He was born in a new condition, because, he was visible in our nature, though invisible in his own; he chose to come within our grasp, though he is beyond our grasp. He began to exist in time, though he exists before time began; though he is Master of the universe, he hid his glory and took the nature of a slave. He did not refuse to be a man capable of suffering, though he was incapable of suffering as God; though immortal, he chose to be subject to the laws of death.

The one who is true God is also true man. There is no falseness to this unity as long as the baseness of man and the preeminence of God coexist in mutual relationship. Just as God does not change by his condescension, man is not swallowed up by being elevated. Each nature exercises its own activity, in communion with the other; the Word does what is proper to the Word, matter does what is proper to matter. One nature glistens with miracles, the other falls victim to injuries. Just as the Word does not lose equality with the Father's glory, his matter does not leave behind the nature of our race.

One and the same person—this must be said over and over again—is truly the Son of God and truly the son of man. He is God in virtue of the fact that “in the beginning, there was the Word, and the Word was face to face with God, and the Word was God.” He is man in virtue of the fact that “the Word took on flesh and made his home among us.”

Receive the Word, Virgin Mary, which the Master has made known to you by the message of the angel: you will conceive and give birth to a son, both God and man, and you will be the most admired of all women.

Though you are a virgin, you will really bear a son; though you are chaste and holy, you will be the mother of our Savior; and you will be the most admired of all women.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since your Word became man and was born from the Virgin Mary, may we please become more like Prince Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our redeemer, God, and man. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



## Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.

I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Born in Paola in Calabria in 1416. He founded a congregation of hermits, called the Order of Minims, approved in 1506. Died at Tours in France in 1507.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Francis of Paola*

May our Master Prince Jesus, a supremely generous giver, reward you for your work.

Avoid evil, and ignore danger. Even though we deserve nothing, we and your brothers never stop praying to God the Father and his Son Prince Jesus and also to the Virgin Mary for you to receive everything you need for your spiritual and physical well-being.

And so I strongly urge you, my brothers, to look to your spiritual well-being with wise concern. Death is certain, and life is short and dissipates like smoke. And so fix your minds on the suffering of our Master Prince Jesus, who came down from heaven, on fire with love, to redeem us. He endured every torment of body and soul for us, and did not avoid any bodily pain. He gave us himself an example of perfect patience and love; and so we are to be patient in hardship.

Put away your hatred and antagonism; be careful not to use sharp words. If they escape your lips, do not be embarrassed to have your lips produce the remedy, since they have caused the wounds. Pardon each other, so that later on you will not remember the injury. Dwelling on an injury is itself wrong; it adds to our anger, nurtures our sin, and hates what is good; it is a rusty arrow and poison for the soul; it routs all virtue. It is like a worm in the mind; it confuses our speech and tears to shreds our prayers to God. It is a stranger to love; it remains planted in the soul like a nail; it is evil that never sleeps, sin that never fails. It is, in fact, a daily death.

Be peace-loving. Peace is a valuable treasure to be searched for with

great fervor. You are well aware that our sins arouse God's anger; and so you must change your life, so that God in his mercy will pardon you. What we conceal from other human beings is known to God; and so change your attitude with a sincere heart. Live your life so that you will receive the Master's blessing, and then the peace of God our Father will be always with you.

Though we remain alive, we are constantly being exposed to death for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be revealed in our mortal bodies.

Even though our exterior body is deteriorating, the inner man is being renewed with each passing day, so that the life of Jesus will be revealed in our mortal bodies.

*Prayer*

Dear Father of those who are insignificant, since you raised St. Francis of Paola to the glory of your saints, may we by his example and prayers come to the rewards you have promised the little people. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*Born ca. 560 at Seville in Spain After his father's death, he was reared by his brother Leander. He was appointed Bishop of Seville, and wrote many learned works. As bishop, he convened several councils in Spain and presided over them with wisdom. Died in 636.*

*Third Reading*

*Book of Maxims by St. Isidore*

Prayer purifies us, reading teaches us. Both are good when both are possible; otherwise, prayer is better than reading.

If a man wants to be always in God's company, he must pray regularly and read regularly. When we pray, we talk to God; when we read, God talks to us.

All spiritual growth comes from reading and reflection. By reading, we learn what we did not know; by reflection, we retain what we have learned.

Reading the Holy Scriptures confers two benefits; it trains the mind to understand them, and it turns man's attention away from the follies of the world and leads him to the love of God.

Two kinds of study are called for here: We must first learn how the Scriptures are to be understood, and then see how to explain them with benefit and in a way appropriate to them. A man must first be eager to understand what he is reading before he is fit to expound on what he has learned.

A conscientious reader will be more concerned to carry out what he has read than merely to acquire knowledge of it. That is, it is a less serious fault to be ignorant of an objective than to fail to carry out what we do know. In reading, we aim at knowing, but we must put into practice what we have learned in our course of study.

No one can understand Holy Scripture without constant reading, in accordance with the words, "Love her and she will elevate you; embrace her and she will glorify you."

The more you devote yourself to a study of the sacred utterances, the richer will be your understanding of them, just as the more the soil is tilled, the richer is the harvest.

Some people have great mental powers, but cannot be bothered with reading; what reading could have taught them is devalued by their neglect. Others have a desire to know, but are hampered by their slow mental processes; yet application to reading will teach them things which the clever fail to learn through laziness.

A man who is slow to grasp things, but who really tries hard is rewarded; in the same way, one who does not cultivate his God-given intellectual ability is condemned for despising his gifts and sinning by sloth.

Learning unsupported by grace may get into our ears; it never reaches the heart. It makes a great noise outside, but serves no interior purpose. But when God's grace touches our innermost minds to bring understanding, his utterance which has been received by the ear sinks deep into the heart.

When a teacher of the law becomes a student of the Kingdom of heaven, he is like the head of a household who is able to take from his storeroom new and old treasures.

Wisdom makes its home in a discerning heart, and it can even teach a stupid person. He is like the head of a household who is able to take from his storeroom new and old treasures.

Prayer

Dear Master, please listen to the prayers we offer in commemoration of St. Isidore, and may your Church learn from his teaching and benefit from his intercession. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Valencia, Spain, in 1350. He joined the Dominicans and taught theology. As a preacher, he traveled through many regions and taught many people to observe the true teachings of their faith and to reform their lives. Died at Vannes, France in 1419.

*Third Reading*

*The Spiritual Life by St. Vincent Ferrer*

When you treat virtuous and sinful acts in your sermons and talks, use simple language and sensible figures of speech. Give apt and precise examples whenever you can. Each sinner in your congregation should feel moved as though you were preaching only to him. Your words should sound as if they were coming from a charitable and loving heart, not a proud or angry soul. Your tone of voice should be that of a father who suffers with his sinful children, as though they were seriously ill or were lying in a huge pit; he struggles to free them, lift them up, and cherish them like a mother, like one who is happy over their progress and the hope they have of heaven's glory.

This way of preaching has proven beneficial to congregations; an abstract lecture on virtues and vices hardly inspires those who listen.

When hearing confessions, you should always radiate the warmest

charity. Whether you are gently encouraging the fainthearted or putting the fear of God into the hardhearted, the penitent should feel that you are motivated only by pure love. Therefore, speak in a pleasant, friendly way before you use words that will prod his conscience.

Finally, if you really want to help the soul of your neighbor, you should first approach God with all your heart. Ask him simply to fill your soul with love, the greatest of all virtues; with it, you can accomplish all that you desire.

Deliver the proclamation, at the right time and the wrong times; refute falsehood, correct errors, and call to obedience.

I announced a change of attitude to the people so that they would turn to God. Refute falsehood, correct errors, and call to obedience.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you called St. Vincent Ferrer to deliver the proclamation about the last judgment, may we come with joy through his prayers to meet your Son in the Kingdom of Heaven, where he is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Rheims, France, in 1651. He devoted himself to the education of boys and the founding of schools for the poor. He founded a religious congregation, for the sake of which he endured many sufferings. Died in Rouen in 1719.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Meditation by St. John Baptist de la Salle*

The Emissary Paul states that God has placed Emissaries, prophets, and teachers in the Church. If you meditate on this, you will be convinced that you too have been given your special place. Paul gives evidence of this; he declares that there are different kinds of service and

## April 7: John Baptist de La Salle, Priest 111

work, and that the same Holy Spirit shows himself in a variety of gifts for the good of everyone; that is, the good of the Church.

And so you should not doubt that you have been given the same kind of grace to teach boys, to instruct them in the Good News, and to form them in religion. This is a great gift which God gave you when he called you to this holy work.

In your teaching, the boys in your charge must see by the way you teach that you are true servants of God, full of true love and sincere in carrying out your task. It is most important for you to realize that you are servants not only of God but also of Prince Jesus and the Church.

St. Paul urges us to regard as servants of the Prince not only everyone who reports the Good News, but those who write the message that the Prince dictates with the spirit of the living God, not ink, and on the tablets of flesh that are our hearts—the hearts of boys—not on stone tablets. Be driven by the love of God, then, because Prince Jesus died for everyone, so that those who are alive would not live for themselves, but for one who died and came back to life for them. Your students should be moved by your untiring care for them, and feel as though God were encouraging them through you, because you perform your duties as ambassadors of the Prince.

Above all, your love and zeal should show how you love the Church. Your work is for the Church, which is the Prince's body. By your exertions, show your love for those God has given you, just as the Prince loved the Church.

Take care to have your boys enter the construction of this temple so that one day they will be fit to stand in glory and without spot or wrinkle before the bench of Prince Jesus. See to it that the abundant grace God has given them will be displayed in the years to come, as well as the grace given you to teach them and to bring them up to inherit the kingdom of God and our Master Prince Jesus.

The people brought little children to Jesus for him to touch them, but the students tried to discourage them. Jesus saw this and said, "Let the children come to me, and do not keep them away; because God's kingdom belongs to people like this."

He blessed them, hugged them, and placed his hands on them. "Let the children come to me, and do not keep them away; because God's

kingdom belongs to people like this.”

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since you chose St. John Baptist de la Salle to give young people a Christian education, please give your Church teachers who will devote themselves to helping your children grow into Christian men and women. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

April 11  
TANISLAUS  
 Bishop, MARTYR

Born in Szczepanow, Poland ca. 1030. He studied in Paris, and was ordained. In 1071, he succeeded Bishop Lambert in Cracow, where he ruled as a good shepherd by helping the poor and visiting his clerics every year. He reprimanded King Boleslaus, who put him to death in 1097.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Cyprian*

As we do battle and fight in the match of faith, God, his angels, and the Prince himself watch us. How high the glory is, and how great is the joy of engaging in a match with God presiding, and of receiving a laurel crown with the Prince as referee.

My dear brothers, we should arm ourselves with all our might, and prepare ourselves for the struggle by innocence of heart, integrity of faith, and dedication to virtue.

The blessed Emissary teaches us how to arm and prepare ourselves. “Put the belt of truth round you; don the breastplate of virtue; for shoes wear zeal for the Good News of peace; take up the shield of faith to put out the burning arrows of the evil one; put on the helmet of rescue, and the sword of the Spirit, which is God’s utterance.”

Let us take this armor and defend ourselves with these spiritual defenses from heaven, so that we will be able to resist the threats of the devil, and fight back on the day of evil. Let us put on the breastplate of virtue to protect our hearts and make them proof against the enemy’s



arrows. Our feet should be protected by the shoes of the teaching of the Good News, so that when we begin to trample on the serpent and crush it, we will not be bitten and tripped by it. We should take up the shield of faith bravely to protect us by extinguishing the burning arrows the enemy may launch against us. Let us wear on our heads the helmet of the spirit to defend our ears against the proclamations of death, our eyes against the sight of cursed idols, our foreheads to keep God's sign intact, our lips so that our tongues will vigorously proclaim their faith in their Master the Prince. Our right hands should be armed with the sword of the Spirit so that they will courageously refuse the daily sacrifices, and, like the hand, remembering the Eucharist, that receives the body of the Master, stretch out to embrace him, and so gain from the Master the future prize of a heavenly winner's crown.

Dear brothers, have all this firmly fixed in your hearts. If the day of persecution finds us thinking about this and meditating upon it, a soldier of the Prince, trained by the Prince's commands and instructions, does not begin to panic at the thought of battle, and is ready for victory.

This holy man engaged in combat for the law of God even to death. He was not afraid of any evil threats; his faith was based on solid rock.

He renounced earthly joys, and so gained the Kingdom of Heaven. His faith was based on solid rock.

Prayer

Dear Father, since St. Stanislaus, to honor you, faced martyrdom with courage, please keep us strong and loyal in our faith until death. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born at Todi, Umbria. He became a member of the clergy of Rome and

was elected pope in 649. He convened the council which condemned the Monothelite Heresy. In 653, he was taken prisoner by Emperor Constans and kept in Constantinople, where he suffered indignities. After being exiled to Kherson, he died in 656.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Martin I*

We wanted all the time in our letters to encourage you in your love and to lessen any anxiety you might have for us; we have had this desire for all the sacred people and all our brothers and sisters who share this concern for us in the Master. But now I am writing to you about things which do cause us distress, and I am telling you the truth in the name of the Prince our God.

Since we are removed from all the turmoil of the world and thrown aside by our sins, we are separated from life itself. That is, the people living in this region are all pagans, and Christians who are known to live in the area have taken on pagan ways, and show none of the love which human beings, even barbarians, normally display in various and sundry deeds of kindness.

In fact, I have been amazed and continue to be amazed at the lack of perceptiveness and the callousness of those who were once connected with me, both my friends and my relatives. They have all completely forgotten about my miserable condition, and do not care to know where I am, or whether I am alive or dead.

And I ask myself what sort of conscience we have, since we are to be brought before the Prince's bench, where all of us who are formed out of the same lump of clay will be the accusers and everyone will have to put up a defense of his life? What is this terror—or fear, if you will, though there is no reason for it—that men seem to have for fulfilling God's commandments even to the slightest degree? Have the evil spirits succeeded so well in concealing me by this enforced exile? Have I been shown so clearly to be an enemy to the entire community of the Church, an antagonist against all my people?

But "God wants every man to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" through the prayers of Peter. And so I pray that God will strengthen their hearts in the orthodox faith, help them to stand firm against every heretic and enemy of the Church, and guard them without quaking. And I ask this especially for their shepherd who has now been appointed over them, so that none of them will fall or go astray or

renounce anything, no matter how trifling, which they professed in writing in the sight of the Master and his holy angels.

In this way, in union with me in my degradation, they will receive the laurel crown of virtue in the true faith from the hand of our Master and Savior Prince Jesus. That is, the Master will himself take care of this insignificant body of mine as befits his providence, whether this means unending suffering or some small consolation. Why am I concerned? “The Master is near.” But my hope is in his kindness, and that he will not be long in putting to an end this course he assigned me.

Give my regards in the Master to all your people and everyone who for love of God has had pity for my chains. May God above shield you with his mighty arm from all trouble and preserve you for his Kingdom.

I have fought in the good match; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith. Now a laurel crown of virtue is waiting for me.

Nothing has seemed worthwhile to me except to know the Prince, to be united with him in his sufferings, and to bear his death in my body. Now a laurel crown of virtue is waiting for me.

#### Prayer

Merciful God, our Father, since neither hardship, pain, or the threat of death could weaken the faith of St. Martin, please give us courage through our faith to endure whatever sufferings the world may inflict upon us. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

April 21  
nsełm  
Bishop, Doctor

Born in Aosta, Piedmont, in 1033. He became a Benedictine at Bec in France, and taught theology to his fellow students. He went to England where he was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. He fought vigorously for the freedom of the Church, and was twice exiled. He has achieved fame for his writings, especially those on mystical theology. Died in 1109.

*Third Reading**The Prosligion by St. Anselm*

My soul have you found what you were looking for? You were looking for God, and you have discovered that he is the supreme being, that you could not possibly conceive of anything more perfect. You have discovered that this supreme being is life itself, light, wisdom, goodness, eternal bliss, and blissful eternity. He is everywhere, and he is timeless.

My Master God, you gave me life and restored it when I lost it. Tell my soul that is longing so much for you what else you are besides what it has already understood, so that it can see you more clearly. It stands on tiptoe to see more, but apart from what it has already seen, it sees nothing but darkness. Of course, it does not really see darkness, because there is no darkness in you; but it sees that it can see no further because of the darkness in itself.

It is sure, Master, that inaccessible light is where you live, because no one apart from you can enter it and fully comprehend you. If I fail to see this light, it is simply because it is too bright for me. Still, it is by this light that I do see all that I can, in the same way as weak eyes, which are unable to look straight at the sun, see all they can by the sun's light.

The light where you live, Master, is beyond my understanding; it is so brilliant that I cannot bear it; I cannot turn my mind's eye toward it for any length of time. I am dazzled by its brightness, amazed by its grandeur, overwhelmed by its immensity, and bewildered by its abundance.

Supreme, inaccessible light, complete and blessed truth, you are so far from me, even though I am so near you! You are such a distance from my sight, even though I am present to yours; you are everywhere in your entirety, and yet I do not see you; in you I move and have my existence, and yet I cannot approach you; you are inside me and around me, and yet I do not perceive you.

My God, please let me know you and love you so that I will find my happiness in you; and if I cannot do this fully in this life, let me at least make some progress every day, until finally that knowledge, love, and joy come to me in all their fullness. While I am here on earth, let me learn to know you better, so that in heaven I will know you fully; let my love for you grow deeper here, so that there I will love you fully. Then I will have great joy in hope on earth, and in heaven I will have complete happiness in the fulfillment of my hope.

My Master, through your Son you command us—no, you advise us—to ask, and you promise that you will listen to us so that our happiness will be complete. Master, I am making the request that you urge us to make through your Wonder-Adviser. And so please give me what you promise to give through your Truth. You are faithful, my God; please grant that I will receive what I have requested, so that my happiness will be complete.

Meanwhile, may this hope of mine be in my thoughts and on my tongue; may my heart be filled with it, my voice speak of it, my soul hunger for it, my body thirst for it, and my whole being yearn for it, until I enter the happiness of the Master, who is Three in One, and blessed through all the ages of ages. Amen.

We honor Anselm, an outstanding teacher and a student of Lanfranc. While an abbot, he was greatly loved by his fellow monks, but he was called to serve as a bishop. He fought strenuously for the freedom of Holy Church.

He steadfastly asserted that the Church, the Prince's bride, was free, not a slave. He fought strenuously for the freedom of Holy Church.

Prayer

Dear Father, since you called St. Anselm to study and teach the sublime truths you have revealed, please have your gift of faith come to the aid of our understanding and open our hearts to your truth. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

April 23



## MARTYR

The veneration of St. George began as early as the 300s at Lydda in Palestine, where a church was built in his honor.

*Third Reading**A Sermon by St. Peter Damian*

Dear brothers and sisters, our joy in today's feast is heightened by our joy in the glory of Easter, just as the splendor of a precious jewel enhances the beauty of its gold setting.

St. George was a man who abandoned one army for another; he gave up the rank of tribune to enlist as a soldier for the Prince. In his eagerness to meet the enemy, he stripped away first his worldly wealth by giving all he had to the poor; then, free and unencumbered, and with the shield of faith, he plunged into the thick of battle as a soldier on fire for the Prince.

Clearly, what he did serves to teach us a valuable lesson: if we are afraid to strip ourselves of our worldly possessions, then we are unfit to make a strong defense of the faith.

As for St. George, he was consumed with the fire of the Holy Spirit. He did battle armed with the unconquerable standard of the cross against an evil king, and won over the ruler of all sinful spirits, and encourages other soldiers of the Prince to perform brave deeds in his cause.

Of course, the supreme invisible judge was there, the one who sometimes permits evil men to gain ground, so that his will can be achieved; and although he gave over the body of his martyr into the hands of murderers, he still continued to take care of his soul, which was supported by the unshakeable defense of the faith.

Dear brothers and sisters, we should not simply admire the courage of this fighter in heaven's army, but follow his example. We should be inspired to exert ourselves for the reward of heavenly glory, keeping his example in mind, so that we will not be driven off our path, even though the world tempts us with its smiles or tries to terrify us with naked threats of its troubles and hardships.

We must now wash ourselves off, as St. Paul tells us, of all defilement of body and spirit, so that we too will one day be fit to enter that temple of bliss we now aspire to. Anyone who wants to offer himself to God in

## April 24: Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Priest, Martyr

the Prince's tent, which is the Church, must first bathe in the spring of the holy Bath; then he must put on the various clothes of the virtues. As it says in the Scriptures: "Your priests are to be dressed in virtue." One who is reborn in the Bath is a new man; he may no longer wear the clothes that signify mortality; he has discarded his old self and must dress himself in the new one; he must live constantly renewed in his commitment to a holy stay in this world.

Yes, we must be washed clean of the stains of our past sins, and gleam in the virtue of our new way of life; then we can be confident of celebrating Easter in a fitting way and of really following the example of the blessed martyrs.

This holy man engaged in combat for the law of God even to death; he was afraid of no evil threats; his faith was based on solid rock. Hallelujah!

He renounced earthly joys, and so gained the Kingdom of Heaven; his faith was based on solid rock. Hallelujah!

### Prayer

Dear Master, please listen to the prayers of those who praise your mighty power, and just as St. George was ready to follow the Prince in suffering and death, may he please be ready to help us in our weakness. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## April 24 Fidelis of Sigmaringen Priest, Martyr

Born in Sigmaringen, Germany, in 1578. He entered the Order of Friars Minor Capuchins and led an austere life of penance, vigils, and prayer. He also preached, and was commissioned by the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith to preach in the canton of the Grisons. In 1622, he was attacked by a band of heretics and was martyred in Seewis, Switzerland.

*Third Reading**A Eulogy for St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen  
by Benedict XIV*

Pope Benedict XIV as a confessor of the Catholic faith in these words: “He practiced the fullness of charity in bringing consolation and relief to his neighbors as well as strangers. With a father’s love, he embraced all those who were in trouble; he supported great numbers of people with the charitable donations he had collected from everywhere.

“With the wealth collected from the powerful and from princes, he comforted widows and orphans in the loneliness. He was always helping prisoners in their spiritual and bodily needs; he showed constant zeal in visiting and comforting the sick whom he would win back to God and prepare for their last struggle.

“The most outstanding example of this meritorious way of life occurred when the Austrian army, stationed in the area of Raetia, was almost totally destroyed by an epidemic. In his pity, he used to bring food for the weak and the dying.”

In addition to his charity, he was faithful in reality as well as in name. His zeal for defending the Catholic faith was unsurpassed, and he preached it tirelessly. A few days before he shed his blood to give evidence to support his preaching, he gave his last sermon. These are the words he left as a testament: “My Catholic faith, how solid and strong you are! How deeply rooted, and ‘how firmly founded upon a solid rock!’ Heaven and earth will cease to exist, but you can never cease. From the beginning, the whole world opposed you, but in your might you triumphed over everything. “This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith.” It has subjected powerful kings to the Prince’s rule; it has bound nations into its service.

“What made the holy Emissaries and martyrs endure severe agony and bitter torments, except faith, and especially faith in the return to life?

“What is it today that makes true followers of the Prince throw luxuries away, leave pleasures behind, and endure hardship and pain? It is living faith “that expresses itself through love.” It is this that makes us put aside the benefits of the present in the hope of future benefit. It is because of faith that we exchange the present for the future.”

I have fought in the good match; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith. Now a laurel crown of holiness is waiting for me.



Hallelujah!

Nothing has seemed worthwhile to me except to know the Prince, to be united with him in his sufferings, and to bear his death in my body. Now a laurel crown of holiness is waiting for me. Hallelujah!

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since you filled St. Fidelis with the fire of your love and gave him the privilege of dying to keep the faith alive, please let his prayers keep us firmly grounded in your love, and help us come to know the power of the Prince's return to life. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

April 25



St. Mark, a cousin of Barnabas, accompanied St. Paul on his first missionary journey and later went with him to Rome. He was a student of St. Peter, whose teaching was the basis for his Report of the Good News. Mark is said to be the founder of the Church in Alexandria; his tomb is in Venice.

*Third Reading*

*Treatise Against Heresies by St. Irenaeus*

The Church, which has spread everywhere, even to the ends of the earth, received the faith from the Emissaries and their students. By faith, we believe in one God, the omnipotent Father, “who made heaven and earth and the sea and everything in them.” We believe in one Master, Prince Jesus, the Son of God, who became man for our rescue. And we believe in the Holy Spirit, who through the prophets foretold God’s plan: the coming of our beloved Master Prince Jesus, his birth from the Virgin, his suffering, his return to life from death, his ascension into heaven, and his final coming from heaven in the glory of the Father, “to

sum up everything” and to raise every human being from death, so that, by the command of his invisible Father, he will pass a just verdict on everything, and so that “every knee in heaven, on earth, and under the earth will bend” to Prince Jesus our Master and our God, our Savior and our King, and “every tongue will acknowledge him.”

The Church, spread throughout the whole world, received this proclamation and this faith, and now preserves it carefully, since it lives, so to speak, in one house. Because the Church has one soul and one heart, it holds this faith, preaches and teaches it consistently as though it had only one voice—because, even though there are many languages, there is only one tradition.

The faith and the tradition of the churches founded in Germany are no different from those founded among the Spanish and the Celts, in the East, in Egypt, in Libya, and elsewhere in the Mediterranean world. Just as God’s creature the sun is one and the same the world over, so does the Church’s preaching shine everywhere, to illuminate all those people who want to come to a knowledge of the truth.

No preacher, however forceful, among those who speak with authority in the churches, will utter anything different—because no one is above the Master—nor will a less forceful preacher diminish what has been handed down. Since our faith is the same everywhere, no one who can say more adds to it, nor can anyone who says less diminish it.

The Prince sent me to report the Good News; but not with this world’s wisdom, in which the Prince’s cross loses all its meaning. Because the message of the cross is stupidity to those who are on the road to ruin, but to those of us on the way to rescue, it is the proof of God’s power. Hallelujah!

The world did not come to know God through wisdom; it has pleased God to save those who believed through the stupidity of the message we preach. Because the message of the cross is stupidity to those who are on the road to ruin, but to those of us on the way to rescue, it is the proof of God’s power. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you gave St. Mark the privilege of reporting the Good News about you, may we please benefit by his wisdom and follow the

Prince more faithfully. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.

Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Born in Cuët, France, in 1803. After ordination, he did pastoral work for a few years, and then joined the Marists and went to Oceania to preach. Despite many hardships, he converted some of the natives. A band of native warriors killed him out of hatred for the faith on the island of Futuna in 1841.

*Third Reading*

*A Eulogy for St. Peter Chanel*

As soon as St. Peter embraced religious life in the Society of Mary, he was sent at his own request to the missions of Oceania, and landed on the island of Futuna in the Pacific Ocean, where the Prince's name had never before been preached. A lay-brother, who was constantly at his side, gave the following account of his life in the missions:

“Because of his work, he was often burned by the head of the sun and famished, and he would return home wet with perspiration and completely exhausted. Yet he always remained in good spirits, courageous, and energetic, as if he were returning from a pleasure trip; and this would happen almost every day.

“He could never refuse anything to the Futunians, even to those who persecuted him; he always made excuses for them and never rejected them, even though they were often rude and troublesome. He displayed an unparalleled mildness toward everyone on all occasions without exception. It is no wonder, then, that the natives used to call him the “good-hearted man.” He once told a fellow religious, ‘In a difficult mission like this, one has to be holy.’”

He preached the Good News quietly; but there was little response; but still, with admirable perseverance, he pursued his missionary task on

## April 28: Peter Chanel, Priest, Martyr 125

both the human and religious level, relying on the example and words of the Prince: "There is one who plants, and another who reaps." And who constantly prayed for help from the Mother of God, to whom he was especially devoted.

By his preaching of Christianity, he destroyed the cult of evil spirits, which the chiefs of the Futunians encouraged to keep the tribe under their rule. This was the reason they subjected St. Peter to an extremely cruel death, hoping that by killing him, the seeds of the Christian religion which he had sowed would be annihilated.

On the day before his martyrdom, he had said, "It does not matter if I die. The Prince's religion is so deeply rooted on this island that it cannot be destroyed by my death."



The blood of this martyr benefitted, in the first place, the natives of Futuna, because a few years later, they were all converted to the faith of the Prince. But it benefitted as well the other islands of Oceania, where Christian churches, which claim St. Peter as their first martyr, are now flourishing.

The harvest is so large, and there are so few to reap it; pray to the Master of the harvest, and beg him to send workers into his harvest. Hallelujah!

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be witnesses to me to the ends of the earth. Pray to the Master of the harvest, and beg him to send workers into his harvest. Hallelujah!

### Prayer

Dear Father, since you called St. Peter Chanel to work for your Church and gave him the crown of martyrdom, may our celebration of the Prince's death and return to life please make us faithful witnesses to the new life he brings; because he is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

April 29  
atherine of iena  
 Virgin, Doctor

Born in Siena in 1347. She entered the Third Order of St. Dominic as a young girl. In her zeal for love of God and neighbor, she established peace and concord between cities, vigorously fought for the rights and freedom of the Pope, and promoted the renewal of religious life. She also composed works of theology and spiritual inspiration. Died in 1380.

*Third Reading*

*Dialogue on Divine Providence  
 by St. Catherine of Siena*

Eternal God, eternal Trinity, you have made the Prince's blood so precious though his sharing in your divine nature. You are a mystery as deep as the sea; the more I search, the more I find, and the more I find, the more I search for you. But I can never be satisfied; what I receive will always leave me desiring more. When you fill my soul, I have an even greater hunger, and I grow more famished for your light. I desire above all to see you, the true light, as you really are.

I have tasted and seen the depth of your mystery and the beauty of your creation with the light of my understanding; I have dressed myself in your likeness and have seen what I will be. Eternal Father, you have given me a share in your power and the wisdom that the Prince claims as his own, and your Holy Spirit has given me the desire to love you. You are my Creator, eternal Trinity, and I am your creature. You have made of me a new creation in the blood of your Son, and I know that you are moved with love at the beauty of your creation, because you have shone your light on me.

Eternal Trinity, Godhead, mystery deep as the sea, you could give me no greater gift than the gift of yourself; because you are a fire always burning but never consumed, which itself consumes all the selfish love that fills my being. Yes, you are a fire that takes away the coldness, illuminates the mind with its light, and causes me to know its truth. By this light, which is, so to speak, reflected in a mirror, I recognize that you are the highest good, one we can neither comprehend nor fathom. And I know that you are beauty and wisdom itself. The food of angels, you gave yourself to human beings in the fire of your love.

You are the clothes which cover our nakedness, and in our hunger you are a satisfying food, because you are sweetness, and there is no taste of bitterness in you, triune God.

My sister, the one I love, open yourself to me; you are a coheir of my Kingdom, and you have understood the hidden mysteries of my truth. You are made rich with the gift of my Spirit, and washed free of all sin by the shedding of my blood. Hallelujah!

Go out of the quiet of contemplation and courageously give evidence of my truth. You are made rich with the gift of my Spirit, and washed free of all sin by the shedding of my blood. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since in meditating on the sufferings of your Son and in serving your Church, St. Catherine was filled with the fervor of your love, may we please by her prayers share in the mystery of the Prince's death and find our joy in the revelation of his glory, because he is living and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit, as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born near Alessandria, Italy, in 1504. He became a Dominican and taught theology, and was made pope in 1566. He vigorously implemented the reform of the Church begun under the Council of Trent, promoted the spread of the faith and renewed worship. Died on May 1, 1572.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Treatise on John by St. Augustine*

God never stops providing the human race with consolations in misfortune; but in addition to this, when the time reached completion, and when he himself knew that it should be done, he sent the only Son he ever fathered, through whom he created everything. His Son was to become man while remaining God, and be “the liaison between God and

men, the man Prince Jesus.”

Those who believed in him through the Bath were freed from the guilt of all their sins, and freed from eternal damnation to live in faith, hope, and love. On their journey among the troubles and dangers of this world, they received the consolations of God in body as well as spirit. They were to walk in his sight, keeping to the path which the Prince made for them.

But even while they walk on this path, they are not without sin, since it develops subtly out of human weakness; and so the Prince gave them the saving remedy of charity to help them in their prayers, because he taught them to say, “please forgive our sins to the extent that we forgive those who have sinned against us.”

This is the practice which the Church carries out in blessed hope during this life of suffering. Now the Emissary Peter, because of the primacy of his apostleship, stood as a symbol of the entire Church.

In himself, he was by nature one man, by grace one Christian, and by a more abundant grace an Emissary and the chief of the Emissaries. But the Prince said to him, “I will give the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven to you; and whatever you lock on earth will be locked in heaven, and whatever you unlock on earth will be unlocked in heaven.” Now these words applied to the whole Church; in this life, it is shaken by various troubles, as if it were by rains, floods, and storms; but it does not fall, because it is founded upon the rock from which Peter received his name.

The Master said, “I will build my Church upon this rock,” because Peter said before this, “You are the Prince, the Son of the living God.” the Master was really saying, “I will build my Church upon the rock which you have acknowledged.” That is, the “rock was the Prince,” and even Peter was built upon this rock. “No one can lay any other foundation except the one that has been laid: Prince Jesus.”

The Church, which is founded on the Prince, received the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven from him: that is, the power of forgiving or not forgiving sins, in the person of Peter. Therefore, this Church, by loving and following the Prince, is set free from evil. But this is even more the case with those who fight on behalf of truth even to death.

If you warn a virtuous man to avoid sin and he does not sin, he will be



sure to live, and you will save your own life. Hallelujah!

Be careful what you do and teach, and you will save yourself and everyone who listens to you; and you will save your own life. Hallelujah!

**Prayer**

Dear Father, since you chose St. Pius V as pope of your Church to protect the faith and give you more fitting worship, please help us by his prayers to celebrate your holy mysteries with a living faith and an effective love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*Third Reading**The Pastoral Constitution on the Church  
in the Modern World by the Second Vatican Council*

By his labor and abilities man has always made efforts to improve the quality of his life. Today, particularly through science and technology, he has extended his mastery over almost the whole of nature, and still continues to extend it. Through the development of the many means of communication among nations, the human family is coming to see itself, and establish itself, as a single worldwide community. As a result, where previously, man looked especially to supernatural forces for blessings, he now secures many of these benefits for himself, thanks to his own efforts.

In the face of this vast enterprise now engaging the whole human race, men are asking themselves a series of questions. What is the meaning and value of all this activity? How should these benefits be used? Where are the efforts of individuals and communities leading us?

The Church is the guardian of the deposit of God's word, from which are drawn the principles of the religious and moral order. Without always having a ready answer to every question, the Church desires to integrate the light of revelation with the skilled knowledge of mankind, so that it will shine on the path on which humanity has lately entered.

Those who believe in God take it for granted that, taken by itself, man's activity, both individual and collective—that great struggle in which men in the course of ages have tried to improve the conditions of human living—is in keeping with God's purpose.

Man, created in God's image, has been commissioned to master the earth and all it contains, and so rule the world in justice and holiness. He

is to acknowledge God as the Creator of everything, and to see himself and the whole universe in relation to God, so that everything will be subject to man, and in God's name be an object of wonder and praise over all the earth.

This commission extends to even the most ordinary activities of everyday life. Where men and women, in the course of gaining a livelihood for themselves and their families, offer appropriate service to society, they can be confident that their personal efforts promote the work of the Creator, confer benefit on their fellow men, and help to realize God's plan in history.

So far from thinking that the achievements gained by man's abilities and strength are in opposition to God's power, or that man with his intelligence is in some sense a rival to his Creator, Christians are, on the contrary, convinced that the triumphs of the human race are a sign of God's greatness and the effect of his wonderful providence.

The more the power of men increases, the wider is the scope of their responsibilities, as individuals and as communities. It is clear, then, that the Christian message does not deflect men from the development of the world, or encourage them to neglect the good of their fellow men, but instead places on them a stricter obligation to work for these objectives.

God the Master put man in the garden of Eden to cultivate the garden and care for it. Hallelujah!

From the beginning of time, this has been man's task: to cultivate the garden and care for it. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, Creator and ruler of the universe, since you call man in every age to develop and use his gifts for the good of others, please help us with St. Joseph as our example and guide to do the work you have asked and come to the rewards you have promised. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

May 2  
 ATHANASIUS  
 Bishop, Doctor

Born in Alexandria in 295. He accompanied Bishop Alexander to the Council of Nicaea, and succeeded him as bishop of Alexandria. He fought against the Arian heresy, and suffered many hardships, and was exiled several times. Died in 373

*Third Reading*

*A Discourse by St. Athanasius*

The Word of God, incorporeal, incorruptible, and immaterial, entered our world—though it was not as if he had been aloof from it up to that time. There is no part of the world that was ever without his presence; together with his Father, he continually filled every thing and place.

Out of his benevolent kindness for us, he came to us, and we see this in the way he revealed himself openly to us. Since he took pity on mankind's weakness and was moved by our corruption, he could not stand aside and see death have the mastery over us; he did not want creation to cease and his Father's work in forming man to be futile. And so he took a body upon himself, a body no different from our own, because he did not wish simply to be in a body or only to be seen. If he had wanted merely to be seen, he could have taken another, nobler body; but instead, he took our body in its reality.

Within the Virgin, he built himself a temple, a body; he made it his own instrument to live in and to use to reveal himself. In this way, he received from mankind a body like our own, and, since everyone was subject to the corruption of death, he handed this body over to death for everyone, and with supreme love offered it to the Father. He did so to destroy the law of decay passed against every human being, since everyone died in him.

The law, which had spent its force on the body of the Master, could no longer have any power against his fellow men. In addition, this was the way in which the Word was to restore mankind to immortality, after we had fallen into corruption, and summon us back from death to life. He utterly destroyed the power death had against mankind, in the way

that fire consumes chaff, by means of the body he had taken and the grace of his return to life.

This is the reason why the Word assumed a body that could die, so that his body, since it shared in the Word who is above everything, could satisfy death's requirement in the place of everyone. Because of the Word whose home was in the body, it would remain incorruptible, and everyone would be freed forever from corruption by the grace of the return to life. In death, the Word made a spotless sacrifice and offering of the body he had taken; by dying for others, he immediately banished death for all mankind.

In this way, the Word of God, who is above everyone, dedicated and offered his temple, the instrument that was his body, for all of us, as he said, and so paid by his own death the debt that was owed. The immortal Son of God, united with every human being by likeness of nature, thus fulfilled the totality of virtue in restoring mankind to immortality by the promise of the return to life.

The corruption of death no longer holds any power over mankind, thanks to the Word, who has come to make his home among them through his one body.

You will be my spokesman; I will make you a solid wall of brass to these people. They will fight you, but they will not win, because I am with you. Hallelujah!

False teachers will come forward; they will sneak destructive heresies in and reject the Master who saved them. They will fight you, but they will not win, because I am with you. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you brought St. Athanasius forward to be an outstanding defender of the truth of the Prince's divinity, may we please by his teaching and protection grown in knowledge and love of you. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

May 3  
 Philip and James  
 EMISSARIES

Philip was born in Bethsaida. At first a student of John the Bather, he became a follower of Jesus. James was the son of Alpheus.

*Third Reading      Treatise on the Prescription of Heretics by Tertullian*

Our Master Prince Jesus himself declared what he was, what he had been, how he was carrying out his Father's will, and what obligations he required of human beings. He did this during his earthly life, either publicly to the crowds or privately to his students; and he picked twelve of them to be his special companions, whom he designated to teach the nations.

One of them fell from his place. The remaining eleven were commanded by the Prince, as he was leaving this earth to return to the Father after his return to life, to go and teach the nations and bathe them into the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Emissaries drew lots and added Matthias to their number in place of Judas, the twelfth Emissary; the authority for this action is to be found in a prophetic psalm of David. After receiving the power of the Holy Spirit which had been promised to them, so that they could work miracles and proclaim the truth, they first gave evidence of their faith in Prince Jesus and established communities throughout Judea; then they went out into the whole world and proclaimed the same teachings of faith to the nations.

They established communities in every city; other communities received from them a living transplant of faith and the seed of the teaching, and through this daily process of transplanting, they became churches. They therefore qualify as apostolic churches by being the offspring of churches that are apostolic.

Every family must be traced back to its origins. That is why we can say that all these great churches constitute the one original Church of the Emissaries; because it is from them that they all come. They are all primitive, all apostolic, because they are all one. They give evidence to the unity by the peace in which they all live, the brotherhood which is

their name, and the fellowship to which they are pledged. The principle on which these associations are based is common tradition, by which they share the same sacramental bond.

The only way in which we can prove what the Emissaries taught—that is to say, what the Prince revealed to them—is through those same churches. They were founded by the Emissaries themselves, who first preached to them by which is called the “living voice” and later by means of letters.

The Master said clearly in earlier times: “I have many more things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now.” But he went on to say, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you to the whole truth.” Thus, the Prince shows us that the Emissaries had full knowledge of the truth, because he had promised that they would receive the “whole truth” through the Spirit of truth. His promise was certainly fulfilled, since the Acts of the Emissaries proves that the Holy Spirit came down on them.

Some Greeks approached Philip with the request to see Jesus. Philip went to tell Andrew, and Philip and Andrew went over to inform Jesus. Hallelujah!

In the very place where it was said to them, “You are not my people,” they will be called sons of the living God. Philip went to tell Andrew, and Philip and Andrew went over to inform Jesus. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you give us joy every year on the festival of the Emissaries Philip and James, may we please by the help of their prayers share in the suffering, death, and return to life of your only Son and come to the eternal vision of your glory. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.

all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



May 12  
Nereus and Achilles  
Martyrs

Both these martyrs were first enrolled in the military tribunal, but both left the military once they converted to the faith. They were condemned to death for the faith, probably during the reign of Diocletian (c. 300). Their tomb is preserved in the cemetery on the Ardeatine Way, where a basilica in their honor is built.

*Third Reading*      *A Commentary on the Psalms by St. Augustine*

Prince Jesus is one man with head and body, the Savior of the body and the parts of the body, the two in one flesh, one voice, one suffering, and when evil has finally ceased, one state of rest. And so the sufferings of the Prince are not only in the Prince alone; true; but the Prince's sufferings are only in the Prince.

If you "the Prince," you mean both head and body, the Prince's sufferings are only in the Prince; but if by "the Prince" you mean only the head, then the Prince's sufferings are not only in the Prince. That is, if the sufferings of the Prince are in the Prince alone, how can the Emissary Paul, as one of the Prince's parts, say this: "I complete in my body what is missing in the Prince's sufferings"?

And so if you are among the parts of the Prince's body, whatever human being you are, whoever you are that is listening to this, and whoever you are that does not hear this (though if you are among the parts of the Prince's body, you do hear this), whatever you suffer at the hands of those who are not among the parts of the Prince's body was missing in the sufferings of the Prince.

You sufferings are added to it because they were missing. You fill up a measuring-cup; you do not pour in something that overflows. You suffer as much as needed to be added from your sufferings to the total suffering of the Prince, who suffered as our head, and suffers in the other parts of his body: that is, in ourselves.

Each one of us to his own degree pays his debt to what may be called this commonwealth of ours. In proportion to our store of strength, we contribute what might be called a tax of suffering. The final accounting of all the suffering will not take place until the world has come to an end.

Do not then imagine, my brothers and sisters, that all the virtuous people who suffered oppression at the hands of evil men, even those who were sent to foretell the Master's coming before he came, did not belong to the parts of the Prince's body. God forbid that anyone who belongs to the city which has the Prince for its king should not belong to the parts of the Prince's body.

In the blood of virtuous Abel, the whole city speaks, and so on until the blood of Zechariah. From then, it is the same city that goes on speaking in the blood of John, in the blood of the Emissaries, in the blood of the martyrs, and in the blood of the Prince's faithful people.

The Master will wipe off every tear from the eyes of his sacred people, and there will no longer be grieving, or crying, or pain, because everything that used to be has ceased to exist. Hallelujah!

They will never again know hunger or thirst, and the sun and dry winds will not beat down on them, because everything that used to be has ceased to exist. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since we honor Sts. Nereus and Achilleus for their courage in dying to profess their faith in the Prince, may we please experience the help of their prayers at your throne of mercy. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Pancras died in Rome probably during the persecution of Diocletian (c. 300). His tomb over which Pope Symmachus built a church is preserved on the Aurelian Way.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Bernard*

“I am with you in trouble,” says God. Then shall I look for anything here below except trouble: “For me it is good to cling to God,” and also “to put my hope in the Master God,” because he has said, “I will rescue him and glorify him.”

“I am with him in trouble. My pleasure,” he says, “is to be with the sons of men”—Emmanuel, God with us. *He* came down to be near those who are in sorrow of spirit, to be with us in our trouble. One day we “will be plucked up into the clouds to meet the Master in the air; and in this way we will always be with the Master”—provided, of course, that we are concerned here below to have him with us as our companion on the journey, and the one who will restore us to our true country—or better, as the one who is our way now and our true country afterwards.

It is good for me to be sorrowful, Master, as long as you are with me, rather than be a king apart from you, to celebrate without you, to feel good about myself without you. It is better for me to hold to you in my trouble and to have you with me in the furnace than to be without you in heaven. “That is, what do I have in heaven apart from you? What have I ever wanted on earth? Gold is refined in a furnace, and virtuous people by the tests of troubles.” It is there—yes, there—that you are present with them, Master; you are there among those who assemble in your name, as you were once with the three young men in the burning furnace.

Why are we afraid, why do we hesitate, and why do we run from this furnace? The fire is raging, but the Master is with us in trouble. “If God is with us, who can be against us?” And if he then rescues us, who will steal us out of his hand? Finally, if he honors us, who can disgrace us? If he honors us, who can humiliate us?

“I will fill him with many, many days.” It is as if he said more clearly, “I know what he wants; I know what he yearns for, and what he likes. He does not like either silver or gold, pleasure or curiosity, or any of the honors of this world. He thinks of all this as loss; he despises all of it, and considers it shit. He has completely emptied himself, and does not allow himself to be concerned with things he knows can never satisfy him. He knows whose image he has been made in, and what greatness he is capable of; he makes no effort to lift himself up only to be cut down from the heights.

“So “I will fill him with many, many days,” because only real light

can refresh him, and only what is eternal can fill him. In fact these “many many days” have no end, this light knows no setting, and this fullness can never turn to disgust.

This holy man engaged in combat for the law of God even to death; he was not afraid of any evil threats; his faith was based on solid rock. Hallelujah!

He renounced earthly joys, and so gained the Kingdom of Heaven. He was not afraid of any evil threats; his faith was based on solid rock. Hallelujah.

#### Prayer

God of mercy, please give your Church joy and confidence through the prayers of St. Pancras, and keep us faithful to you and steadfast in your service. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Because he had witnessed the Master’s return to life, St. Matthias was chosen by the other Emissaries to replace Judas.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Homily on Acts by St. John Chrysostom*

“In those days, the Rock stood up among the students and said...” As the fiery spirit to whom the flock was assigned by the Prince, and as the leader in the band of Emissaries, Peter always took the initiative in speaking. “My brothers, we must choose someone from among our number.” He left the decision to the whole body, simultaneously adding to those chosen and avoiding any suspicion of partiality—because great occasions like this can easily lead to trouble.

Did not Peter have the right to make the choice himself? Of course he had the right, but he did not want to give the appearance of showing

special favor to anyone. Besides, he was not yet endowed with the Spirit. “And they nominated two,” we read, “Joseph, who was also called Barsabbas and nicknamed ‘the honest man,’ and Matthias.” He did not nominate them himself; all those present did; but it was he who brought the issue forward, and pointed out that it was not his own idea, but had been suggested to him by a Scriptural prophesy. So he was speaking as an interpreter rather than as a teacher.

“So,” he goes on, “we must choose someone from among those who are in our company.” Notice how insistent he is that they should be eyewitnesses. Even though the Spirit would come to ratify the choice, Peter regards this prior qualification as crucial.

“Those who lived in our company,” to continue the passage, “all through the time when Master Jesus traveled among us.” He refers to those who had lived with Jesus, not just those who had been his students; because, of course, from the very beginning, there were many who had followed him. Notice how it is written that Peter himself was “one of the two who had listened to John and followed Jesus.”

“All through the time when Master Jesus traveled among us,” to continue further, “beginning with John’s Bath.” This was proper, because no one knew what had happened before that time, although they were to know of it later through the Spirit.

“Up to the day,” Peter added, “on which he was taken up away from us; one of these must be made a witness of his return to life along with us.” He did not say, “a witness of the rest of his deeds,” but only “a witness of his return to life.” A witness would be more credible if he could affirm that one he had meals with also came back to life from being dead. He did not need to be a witness of the times before or after that event, and not of the signs and miracles, but only of the resurrection itself. Everyone knew that the rest happened, because it was public; but the resurrection took place privately, and was known only to these men.

And they all prayed together, and said, “Master, you know people’s hearts; please make your choice known to us.” “You,” not “we.” It was appropriate that they said that he knew people’s hearts, because the choice was to be made by him, not others.

They spoke with such confidence, because someone had to be appointed. They did not say, “choose,” but “make known to us” the chosen one, “the one you choose,” they said, fully aware that everything

was preordained by God. “They then drew lots.” That is, they did not think that they were themselves fit to make the choice on their own, and so they wanted some sign for their instruction.

Master, you know everyone’s hearts, and so please show us the one you chose to undertake this service and apostleship. Hallelujah!

They drew lots, and the choice fell on Matthias, and he was added to the eleven Emissaries. Please show us the one you chose to undertake this service and apostleship. Hallelujah!


#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you called St. Matthias to share in the mission of the Emissaries, may we please by the help of his prayers receive with joy the love you share with us and be included among those you have chosen. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 “Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaims you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,

the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.

May 18  

 ohn 1  
 Pope, MARTYR

Born in Tuscany, John was chosen bishop of Rome in 523. He went to Emperor Justin in Constantinople as an ambassador of King Theodoric, and on his return, he was captured by the king, who was displeased at the outcome of the embassy, and thrown into prison in Ravenna, where he died in 526.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. John of Avila*

“We have to give praise to the God and Father of our Master Prince Jesus—the Father of sympathy and tenderheartedness and the God of every kind of support—the one who has encouraged us in every hardship we have had, so we can support others in all their hardships with the support we received from God; because, to the extent that the Prince’s

suffering has overflowed into us, support for us from the Prince has also been overflowing.”

The words are those of the Emissary St. Paul. He was beaten with rods three times, whipped five times, stoned once and left for dead; he suffered every persecution men can inflict, and his body was twisted by pain and hard work. And all this was his fate not simply on one or two occasions, because he writes, “We are constantly being handed over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life will be revealed in us.”

In all this hardship, he does not complain or grumble about God, the way weaker men do. He is not distressed in the way those who love status and pleasure are; he does not beg God to be relieved of it, as men who are unaware of their real value do, and who therefore will have no part of it. No, Paul is fully aware of the value of this hardship, and he rises above his own weakness, and he blesses God in the teeth of his suffering, and thanks him as if he had given him a fine reward. He thinks it an honor to be able to suffer for the one who subjected himself to so much disgrace to free us from the dreadful effects of sin, who elevated us by giving us his Spirit and making us adopted sons of God, and who gave us, in his own person and through his own efforts, a proof and pledge of heavenly joy.

Dear brothers and sisters, I pray that God will open your eyes and let you see what hidden treasures he bestows on us in the troubles the world only thinks of running from. Disgrace turns into honor when we see God’s glory. Present hardship becomes the source of heavenly resplendence. God opens his arms in loving, tender friendship to those who suffer wounds in fighting his battles, and this is far more pleasurable than anything our earthly efforts can produce. If we have any sense, we will yearn for these open arms of God; can anyone but a man in whom all desire is dead fail to desire the one who is totally lovable and totally desirable?

If you long for these celebrations of heavenly joy, and if you want to see them and take part in them, be assured that there is no better way to reach them than the way of suffering. This is the way the Prince and his students have always traveled; he calls it a “narrow way,” but it leads straight to life. This is why he tells us that if we want to join him, we are to travel the road he took; it is surely not right for the Son of God to go his way on the path of shame while the sons of men walk the way of



worldly honor. “A student is not greater than his teacher, and a slave is not better than his master.”

God grant that our hearts will find no rest and look for no other food in this world than hardship and suffering beside the Master’s cross.

Even though we keep living, we are constantly being handed over to death for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be revealed in our mortal bodies. Hallelujah!

Even though our external body is decaying, the man inside is being renewed with every passing day, so that the life of Jesus will be revealed in our mortal bodies. Hallelujah!



Born at Massa Marittima in Tuscany in 1380. He became a Franciscan and after ordination traveled through Italy preaching with great success. He increased devotion to the holy name of Jesus and encouraged learning in his order. He also wrote theological treatises. Died in Aquila in 1444.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Bernardine of Siena*

The name “Jesus” is the boast of preachers, because the shining splendor of that name causes what he said to be reported and heard. And how do you think such an immense, sudden, and dazzling light of faith came into the world, if not because a proclamation was delivered about Jesus? Was it not through the brilliance and sweet taste of this name that God “called us into his marvelous light”? When we have been illuminated, and in that same light look upon the light of heaven, the Emissary Paul can appropriately say to us, “Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Master; conduct yourselves like children of light.”

So this name must be reported, so that it will shine out and never be suppressed; but it must not be reported by someone with a defiled mind or filthy lips; it must be preserved and poured out of a chosen container.

That is why our Master said of St. Paul, “He is an instrument I have chosen, the container I have picked to carry my name before the Gentiles

and kings and the descendants of Israel.” In this chosen container there was to be a drink more pleasing than earth ever knew, offered to all mankind for a price they could pay, so that they would be drawn to taste it. When it was poured into other chosen containers, it would grow and radiate splendor; as our Master said, “He is to carry my name.”

When a fire is lit to clear a field, it burns off all the dry and useless weeds and thorns. When the sun rises and darkness vanishes, robbers, night stalkers, and burglars hide. In the same way, when Paul’s voice was raised in reporting the Good News to the nations like a great clap of thunder in the sky, his preaching was a blazing fire carrying everything before it. It was the sun rising in full glory. Faithlessness was burnt up by it, false beliefs ran away, and the truth appeared like a great torch lighting the whole world with its brilliant flame.

By word of mouth, by letters, by miracles, and by the example of his own life, St. Paul carried the name “Jesus” wherever he went. He praised the name of Jesus “at all times,” but never more than when “giving evidence to his faith.”

In addition, the Emissary did in fact carry this name “before Gentiles, kings, and the descendants of Israel” as a light to illuminate every nation. This was his cry wherever he journeyed: “The night is about to end, and day is near; and so let us take off the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves honorably, as we do during the day.” And Paul made the burning and shining light set on a lampstand obvious himself, as he reported everywhere about “Jesus, and Jesus crucified.”

And so the Church, the Prince’s bride, which was made strong by the evidence he presented, finds pleasure with the psalmist, and sings, “My God, you have taught me from the time I was young, and I still announce your wondrous actions.” The psalmist urges the Church to do this, when he says, “Sing to the Master, and bless his name; announce his rescue every day.” And his rescue is Jesus, her Savior.

I will always praise your name, and will sing a hymn of gratitude to you.  
Hallelujah!

I will find my pleasure in you and be happy; I will sing to your name,  
Supreme Being, and will sing a hymn of gratitude to you. Hallelujah!

## May 25: Venerable Bede, Priest, Doctor 147

### Prayer

Dear Father, since you gave St. Bernardine a special love for the holy name of Jesus, by the help of his prayers may we be always alive with the spirit of your love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born near Wearmouth Monastery in 673. He was trained by St. Benedict Bishop and entered the monastery. After ordination, he taught and wrote theological and historical works in the patristic tradition and explained Sacred Scripture. Died in 735.

### *Third Reading Letter on the Death of Venerable Bede by Cuthbert*

On Tuesday before the feast of Ascension, Bede's breathing became labored, and a slight swelling appeared in his legs; but he still gave us instruction all day long and dictated cheerfully the whole time. Among other things, he repeated several times, "Learn your lesson quickly, because I do not know how long I will be with you or whether my Maker will take me from you soon." It seemed to us, however, that he knew very well that his end was near, and so he spent the whole night showing gratitude to God.

At dawn on Wednesday, he told us to finish the writing we had begun. We worked until nine o'clock, when we went in procession with the relics as the custom of that day required. But one of our community, a boy named Wilbert, stayed with him and said to him, "Dear master, there is still one more chapter to finish in that book you were dictating. Do you think it would be too hard for you to answer any more questions?" Bede replied, "Not at all; it will be easy. Take up your pen and ink, and write quickly," and he did so.

At three o'clock, Bede said to me, "I have a few treasures in my private chest: some pepper, napkins, and a little incense. Run quickly and

bring the priests of our monastery, and I will distribute among them these little presents that God has given me.”

When the priests arrived, he spoke to them and asked each one to offer Masses and prayers for him regularly. They gladly promised to do so. The priests were sad, however, and they all wept, especially because Bede had said that he thought they would not see his face much longer in this world. Yet they were happy when he said, “If it so please my Maker, it is time for me to return to the one who created me and formed me out of nothing when I did not exist. I have lived a long time, and the virtuous Judge has taken good care of me during my whole life. The time has come for my departure, and I long to die and be with the Prince. My soul yearns to see the Prince, my King, in all his glory.” He said many other things which we found very beneficial, and so he passed the day joyfully until evening.

When evening came, young Wilbert said to Bede, “Dear master, there is still one sentence that we have not written down.” Bede said, “Quick, write it down.” In a little while, Wilbert said, “There; now it is written down.” Bede said, “Good. You have spoken the truth; it is finished. Hold my head in your hands, because I really enjoy sitting opposite the holy place where I used to pray; I can call upon my Father as I sit there.”

And so Bede, as he lay upon the floor of his cell, sang, “Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,” and when he had named the Holy Spirit, he breathed his last breath. We believe with complete firmness that Bede has now entered the joy of the heaven he longed for, since his labors here on earth were always dedicated to the glory of God.

During all of my years in the monastery, I spent long hours in meditating on the sacred Scriptures; I was always faithful to the holy rule and to the daily chanting of the hours. I found delight in constant study, teaching and writing. Hallelujah!

The man who obeys God’s law and teaches others to do so will be great in the kingdom of heaven. I found delight in constant study, teaching and writing. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you have illuminated your Church with the learning

of St. Bede, may your people learn in your love from his wisdom and benefit from his prayers. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also May 25  

**Gregory VII**  
 Pope

Hildebrand was born in Tuscany about 1028. He was educated at Rome and entered the monastic life, where he helped the popes of his time through many missions on behalf of Church reform, and in 1073 became pope as Gregory VII. Besieged by King Henry IV, he died a refugee in Salerno in 1085.

*Fourth Reading*

*A letter by St. Gregory VII*

I ask and beg you in Master Jesus, who redeemed us by his death, to please by careful investigation become aware of the trials and suffering brought on me by the enemies of Christianity, and to understand why and how I endure them.

By God's will Mother Church placed me, however little I deserve it (and God knows I was unwilling too) upon the Apostolic throne; and with all my powers I have tried to see that the holy Church, the bride of God, our lady and mother, would return to the beauty which is properly hers, and remain free, chaste, and universal. But because this causes such pain to our ancient enemy, he has armed his underlings against us to try to upset all our efforts. What he has been unable to do from the days of Constantine the Great, he now does against us and particularly against the Apostolic See. Do not be surprised that as time goes on, he will fight all the harder to erase the Christian religion.

But now, my brothers and very good friends, please listen carefully to what I tell you. All those throughout the world who are included among the Christians and who truly acknowledge the Christian faith know and believe that the blessed Rock, the head of the Emissaries, is the father of all Christians and, after the Prince, the first shepherd; and that the holy Roman Church is the mother and teacher of all the communi-

ties. Therefore, if you believe this and hold to it without hesitation, I ask you and command you by Almighty God—I, your brother and your undeserving teacher—to support and give assistance to your father and your mother if you wish to have, through them, the removal of all your sins, along with blessing and grace in this world and in the life to come.

May the omnipotent God, from whom everything good comes, continually illuminate your minds and fill them with love for him and for your neighbors, so that by your devotion you will deserve to make this father and mother of whom I have spoken your debtors, and enter without shame into their company. Amen.

The Master glorified him in the sight of kings, and gave him commandments for his people. God revealed his glory to him. Hallelujah!

The Master chose him to be a slave, a shepherd of his own Israel. God revealed his glory to him. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Master, please give your Church the spirit of courage and love for virtue which distinguished Pope Gregory, and make us courageous in condemning evil and free us to pursue virtue with love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Florence in 1566. After a religious upbringing, she entered the Carmelites, where she led a solitary life of prayer and self-denial, prayed fervently for Church reform and directed her fellow sisters on the road to perfection. Died in 1607.

*Fifth Reading*

*On Revelation and On Trials  
by St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi*

## ALSO MAY 25: MARY MAGDALENE DE PAZZI, VIRGIN

You, the Word, are marvelous, as you work through the Holy Spirit to fill souls with yourself, so that they are joined to God, take hold of God, taste God, and absorb nothing but God.

The Holy Spirit comes into a soul signed with the priceless seal of the blood of the Word and of the slain Lamb; or rather, that very blood urges him to come, although the Spirit moves himself and desires to come.

The Spirit who moves in himself is the reality of the Father and the Word, and he proceeds from the being of the Father and the good will of the Word; he comes into the soul like a spring, a fountain, and the soul is immersed in him. Just as two rushing rivers intermingle in such a way that the smaller loses its name and is absorbed into the larger, the divine Spirit acts on the soul and absorbs it in the same way. It is proper for the soul, which is less, to lose its name and surrender to the Spirit, as it will if it turns entirely toward the Spirit and is united to him.

This Spirit, who is the dispenser of the treasures which lay in the lap of the Father, and is guardian of the deliberations passing between the Father and the Son, flows into the soul so pleasantly and imperceptibly that few people fathom his greatness.

He moves himself by his own weight and lightness into every place that is fit and disposed to receive him; his words are heard by everyone in the most attentive silence, and through the impetus of love, the unmoved and yet absolutely perfect mover infuses himself into everyone.

You do not, Holy Spirit, stand still in the unmoved Father or in the Word, and yet you are always in the Father and the Word and in yourself and in every blessed spirit and creature. You are the friend of what is created, because of the blood shed by the only-sired Word, who in the greatness of his love made himself the friend of what is created. You find rest in creatures who are prepared to receive you, so that in the transmission of your gifts, they take on, through purity, their own particular resemblance to you. You find rest in those creatures who absorb the effects of the blood of the Word and make themselves a fitting home for you.

Please come, Holy Spirit. May the priceless pearl of the Father and the Word's delight come to us. Spirit of truth, you are the reward of the saints, the comforter of souls, light in the darkness, riches for the poor, treasure for lovers, food for the hungry, comfort for those who are

wandering; in sum, you are the one in whom every treasure is contained.

Please come! As you descended upon Mary, so that the Word would become flesh, please work in us through grace as you worked in her through nature and grace.

Please come! You are the food of every chaste thought, the source of all mercy, the sum of all purity.

Please come! Consume in us whatever prevents us from being consumed in you.

No eye has seen or ear heard, nor has the heart of man conceived the marvels that God has prepared for those who love him. Hallelujah!

God has revealed all this to us through his Spirit: the marvels that God has prepared for those who love him. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you love those who give themselves completely to your service, and you filled St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi with heavenly gifts and the fire of your love, may we please, as we honor her today, follow her example of purity and chastity. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Florence in 1515, he went to Rome and began to work with young men among whom he fostered Christian life and formed an association for the poor and sick. Ordained in 1551, he founded the Oratory, where spiritual reading, singing, and works of charity were practiced. He excelled in love of neighbor, simplicity and joyous service to God. Died in 1595.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Sermon by St. Augustine*

The Emissary tells us to be happy, but in the Master, not in the world. "If anyone wants to be a friend of this world," says Scripture, "he



will be considered an enemy of God.” In the same way as a man cannot be the slave of two masters, one cannot find his pleasure both in the world and in the Master.

So we should make happiness in the Master win the struggle, until there is no more happiness in the world. Joy in the Master should go on increasing, and joy in the world decreasing until it no longer exists. This is not said because we are not to be happy while we are in the world, but so that, even while we are still in this world, we will already find our pleasure in the Master.

You may raise the objection, “If I am in the world, and find pleasure, then I am certainly finding pleasure where I am.” What is this? Do you mean that because you are in the world, you are not in the Master? Listen again to the Emissary, who is now speaking to the Athenians: in the Acts of the Emissaries, he says this of God and our creator the Master: “We live, move, and have our being in him.” If he is everywhere, where isn’t he? Surely this was what he was advising us to realize. “The Master is near; do not be anxious about anything.”

This is a great truth, that he rose up above all the heavens, but is near to those on earth. And who is this foreigner and neighbor but the one who became our neighbor out of sympathy for us?

The man lying on the road left half-dead by robbers, the man treated with contempt by the priest and the Levite who passed by, the man approached by the passing Samaritan to take care of him and help him, is the whole human race. When the immortal person, the holy one, was far removed from us because we were mortal and sinners, he came down to us, so that he, the foreigner, would become our neighbor.

“He did not treat us as our sins deserved.” The reason is that we are now children of God. And how do we show this? The only Son of God died for us so that we would not remain alone. The one who died as the only Son did not want to remain the only Son; the only Son of God made many children of God; he bought brothers for himself by his blood; he made them by being sold; he honored them by being dishonored; he gave them life by being put to death.

So, my brothers and sisters, “be happy in the Master,” not in the world. That is, be happy in the truth, not in vice; be happy in the hope of eternity, not in the wilting flower of self-love. That is the way to be happy; wherever you are on earth, “The Master is near; do not be

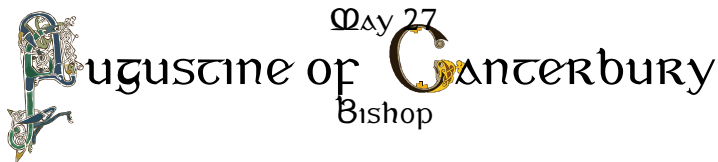
anxious about anything.”

Be happy, brothers and sisters, try hard to become perfect; encourage each other, and live in harmony and peace, and the God of peace and love will be with you. Hallelujah!

May the God of hope fill you with total joy and peace through your faith in him, and the God of peace and love will be with you. Hallelujah!

**Prayer**

Dear Father, since you continually raise your faithful people to the glory of holiness, please in your love light in us the fire of the Holy Spirit, who so filled the heart of Philip Neri. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Sent in 597 from St. Andrew's Monastery in Rome by St. Gregory the Great to preach the Gospel in England, Augustine was aided there by King Ethelbert and chosen bishop of Canterbury. He converted many to the faith and established many dioceses. Died on May 26, ca. 605.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Gregory the Great*

“Glory to God in the heights of heaven and peace on earth to those in his favor,” because the grain of wheat has fallen into the ground and died. The Prince died so that he could reign in heaven, but not simply that; we are alive because of his death, we are strengthened by his weakness, freed from suffering by his suffering, driven by his love, we are searching out brothers in Britain whom we do not know; and through his help we have found those we were searching for, even though we were not acquainted with them.

No one, my brothers, can describe the great joy of believers when they have learned what the grace of the Omnipotent God and your own cooperation achieved among the Angles. They left the errors of darkness

## May 27: Augustine of Canterbury, Bishop 155

and were bathed with the light of holy faith; with full awareness, they trampled on the idols which they had previously adored with savage fear, and they are now entrusted to the Omnipotent God. The guidelines given them for their preaching keep them back from falling into evil habits; they are submissive in their minds to the divine regulations and because of this feel elated. They bow down to the ground in prayer to keep their minds from grasping earthly things too tightly. And whose achievement is this? It is the achievement of the one who said, "My Father is at work up to now, and so now I am working too."

God chose illiterate preachers and sent them into the world to show that world that conversion is brought about by God's own power and not human wisdom. God worked in the same way through weak instruments and yet brought about great results among the Angles. Dear brother, in this heavenly gift there is something which should inspire great fear and joy in us.

That is, I know that through your love for that people, who were specially chosen for you, God has performed great miracles; but the same heavenly gift must make you happy with fear and make you fearful with joy. You should be happy because the souls of the Angles have been led to interior grace by external miracles; but you should be fearful that the preacher's soul might become conceited and presumptuous—that it might fall internally from pride while it appears to be elevated high with honor.

We should remember that when the students, on their joyous return from their preaching said to their heavenly Master, "Master, in your name even devils were slaves to us!" he immediately retorted, "Do not be happy about this; be happy that your names are written in heaven."

Be imitators of me, my brothers and sisters; and since you have us as models, observe those who follow the example we set. Live in accordance with what you have learned and accepted, what you have heard me say or seen me do, and the God of peace will be with you. Hallelujah!

I beg you, my brothers and sisters, in the name of our Master Prince Jesus, please agree among yourselves. Live in accordance with what you have learned and accepted, what you have heard me say or seen me do, and the God of peace will be with you. Hallelujah!

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since by the preaching of St. Augustine of Canterbury, you led the people of England to the Good News, may the fruits of his work continue in your Church. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## May 31

*Third Reading**A Homily by Venerable Bede*

“My soul is full of the Master’s magnificence, and my spirit is bursting with joy in God, my Savior.” With these words, Mary first acknowledges the special gifts she has been given, and then recalls God’s favors to everyone which are bestowed constantly on the human race.

When a person devotes all his thoughts to the praise and service of the Master, he proclaims God’s magnificence; and in addition, his observance of God’s commands shows that he has God’s power and greatness always at heart. His spirit bursts with joy in God, his Savior, and is delighted with the mere recollection of his Creator, who gives him hope for eternal rescue.

These words are often for all God’s creations, but especially for the Mother of God. She alone was chosen, and she was on fire with spiritual love for the son she so joyously conceived. Above all the other saints, she alone could really find her pleasure in her Savior Jesus, because she knew that the one who was the source of eternal rescue would be born in time in her body, in one person both her own son and her Master.

“Because the God of Power—the one whose very name is holy—has done tremendous things in me!” Mary attributes nothing to her own merits; she refers all her greatness to the gift of the one whose essence is power and whose nature is greatness, because he fills with greatness and strength the small and the weak who believe in him.

She did well to add, “the one whose very name is holy,” to warn those who were listening, and in fact everyone who would hear these words, that they must believe and call upon his name; because they too could share in eternal holiness and true rescue, as the words of the prophet foretold, “and it will happen that everyone who calls on the Master’s name will be saved.” This is the name she spoke of earlier: “And my spirit is bursting with joy in God, my Savior.”

And so, it is an excellent and profitable custom of holy Church that we sing Mary’s hymn at the time of Vespers; by meditating on the incarnation, our devotion is kindled, and by remembering the example of God’s mother, we are encouraged to lead a life of virtue. Virtues like this are best achieved in the evening, because we are weary after the day’s work and worn out by our distractions. The time for rest is near, and our minds are ready for contemplation.

It is so wonderful that you believed, because the Master’s promises will be fulfilled in you. And Mary said, “My soul is full of the Master’s magnificence.” Hallelujah!

Come and listen and I will tell what tremendous things God has done for me. My soul is full of the Master’s magnificence. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Eternal Father, since you inspired the Virgin Mary, mother of your Son, to visit Elizabeth and help her in her need, please keep us open to the working of your Spirit, and help us praise you with Mary forever. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim

cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Born of pagan parents at Flavia Neapolis in Samaria at the beginning of the second century. Following his conversion to the faith, he wrote many works in defense of religion, of which we have only two: the *Apology* and the *Dialogue with Trypho*. He also opened a school at Rome in which public debates were held. He was martyred along with several companions during the reign of Marcus Aurelius around 165.

*Third Reading*

*The Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Justin  
and his Companions*

The sacred people were arrested and brought before the prefect of Rome, a man named Rusticus. As they stood at the bench, the prefect Rusticus said to Justin, “Before everything else, have faith in the gods and obey the emperors.” Justin answered, “We cannot be charged or condemned for obeying the commands of our Savior Prince Jesus.”

Rusticus said, “What system of teaching do you hold?” Justin answered, “I have tried to learn about every system, but I have accepted as true the teaching of the Christians, even though they are not accepted by those who are still gripped by error.”

The prefect Rusticus then said, “Do you accept that teaching, you miserable fool?” and Justin said, “Yes, I follow it because it is correct teaching.”

“What teaching is that?” said the prefect Rusticus, “Worship the God of the Christians,” Justin answered. “We hold him to exist from the beginning as the one Creator and maker of the whole of creation, of what is visible and invisible. We also worship the Master Prince Jesus, the Son of God; he was foretold by the prophets as the future herald of rescue for the human race, and the teacher of distinguished students. As to myself, since I am a human being, I consider what I say to be nugatory in comparison with his infinite divinity. I acknowledge the existence of a prophetic power, because the one I have just spoken of as the Son of God was the subject of prophesy. I know that the prophets were inspired from above when they spoke of his coming among men.”

“You are a Christian, then?” said Rusticus. Justin answered, “Yes, I

am a Christian.”

The prefect then told Justin, “You are called a learned man, and think you know what true teaching is. Listen: if you were whipped and beheaded, are you convinced that you would go up to heaven?”

“I hope that I will enter God’s house if I suffer in that way,” said Justin; “because I know that God’s favor is stored up until the end of the whole world for those who have lived good lives.”

“Do you have an idea that you will go up to heaven,” said the prefect Rusticus, “to receive some suitable reward?” Justin answered, “It is not an idea I have; it is something I know for a fact and am absolutely certain of.”

“Now let us come to the point at issue,” said the prefect Rusticus, “which is necessary and urgent. Gather round here, then, and together offer sacrifice to the gods.” Justin said, “No right-thinking person stoops from true worship to false worship.”

“If you do not do as you are commanded,” said the prefect Rusticus, “you will be tortured without mercy.”

“We hope to suffer torment for the sake of our Master Prince Jesus,” said Justin, “and so be saved. Because this will achieve our rescue and bring us confidence as we stand before the more fearsome bench of our Master and Savior, where everyone is called.”

The other martyrs also said in the same way, “Do what you choose; we are Christians; we do not offer sacrifice to idols.”

The prefect Rusticus then pronounced the sentence, and said, “Those who have refused to sacrifice to the gods and to obey the command of the emperor are to be whipped and taken away to suffer capital punishment as the laws state.”

Then, glorifying God, the holy martyrs went out to the usual place. They were beheaded, and so fulfilled their task as witnesses in their martyrdom in acknowledging their faith in their Savior.

I have preached faith in our Master Prince Jesus, and now I am afraid of no danger. I do not consider my life more valuable than my work, which is to finish my course, the task of preaching and proclaiming the good news of God’s favor. Hallelujah!

I am not embarrassed by the Good News, because it is God’s power at work, bringing rescue to everyone who believes in it: Judean first, and



## June 2: MARCELLINUS AND PETER, MARTYRS 161

then Greek. I do not consider my life more valuable than my work, which is to finish my course, the task of preaching and proclaiming the good news of God's favor. Hallelujah!

### Prayer

Dear Father, since through the stupidity of the cross you taught St. Justin the sublime wisdom of Prince Jesus, may we too reject falsehood and remain loyal to the faith. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## June 2 MARCELLINUS AND PETER MARTYRS

Pope Damasus is our authority for the martyrdom of Sts. Marcellinus and Peter during the persecution of Diocletian. He received this information from the executioner himself. They were beheaded in a grove, but their bodies were moved and buried in the cemetery *Ad duas Lauros* on the Via Labicana. Once peace had been restored, the Church built a basilica over their tombs.

### *Third Reading*

### *The Exhortation to Martyrdom, by Origen*

If passing from unbelief to faith means that we have “passed from death to life,” we should not be surprised to find that “the world hates us.” Anyone who has not “passed from death to life” is incapable of loving those who have left death’s dark residence to enter a residence “made of living stones” and filled with the light of life. Jesus “gave up his life for us”; and so we too should give up our lives, I will not say for him, but for ourselves and also, certainly, for those who will be helped by the example of our martyrdom.

Now is the time for Christians to find their happiness, since Scripture says that “we should be happy over our sufferings, since we know that suffering trains us to persevere with patience, and patient perseverance make us pleasing to God, and being pleasing to God gives us grounds for a hope that will not be disappointed.” Only “let the love of God be

poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.”

“The more we share the sufferings of the Prince, the more we share, through him, in his comfort.” We should be extremely eager to share the Prince’s sufferings and to let them accumulate in us if we want the overflowing comfort that will be given to those who are suffering. This comfort will not perhaps be the same for everyone, because if it were, Scripture would not say, “The more we share the sufferings of the Prince, the more we share in his comfort.” Sharing in his comfort will be in proportion to our sharing in his suffering. We learn this from a person who could say with all confidence, “We know that to the extent you share in the sufferings, you will also share in the comfort.”

God says through the prophet, “I listened to you at an acceptable time; I helped you on the day of rescue.” What time could be more acceptable than when we are made a public spectacle for our fidelity to the Prince, and led off under guard triumphant and not defeated?

It is in the Prince and with the Prince that the martyrs disarm the principalities and powers and share in his triumph over them, because their share in the Prince’s sufferings makes them also sharers in the mighty deeds these sufferings accomplished. What could more appropriately be called the day of rescue than the day of such a glorious departure from this world? But I beg you “not to give offense to anyone, so that our service will not be found to be to blame. Be very patient and show in every way that you are God’s slaves. Say, ‘And now, who am I waiting for? Is it not for the Master?’”

Our struggle is not against human enemies; it is against the principalities and powers, against the evil spirits. Stand firm and let the truth be the belt around your waist. Hallelujah!

Put on God’s armor, and then you will be able to stand firm when the worst happens; you will fulfill all your duties and hold your ground. Stand firm and let the truth be the belt around your waist. Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, may we benefit from the example of your martyrs Marcellinus and Peter and be supported by their prayers. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages

June 3: CHARLES LWANGA AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

of ages. Amen.

June 3  
HARLES LWANGA  
AND COMPANIONS  
MARTYRS

During the years 1885-1887, many Christians were killed in Uganda by King Mwanga, though some were favorites at his court and some related to him; among these were Charles Lwanga and 21 companions.

*Third Reading*

*A Homily at the Canonization of the Martyrs  
by Paul VI*

The African martyrs add another page to the martyrology—the Church’s role of honor—an occasion both of mourning and of joy. This is a page deserving in every way of being added to the annals of that Africa of earlier times which we, living in this era and being men of little faith, never expected to be repeated.

In earlier times, there occurred those famous deeds, so moving to the spirit, of the martyrs of Scilli, of Carthage, and of that “white-robed army” of Utica commemorated by St. Augustine and Prudentius; of the martyrs of Egypt so highly praised by St. John Chrysostom, and of the martyrs of the Vandal persecution. We would have thought that in our days we would have witnessed events as heroic and glorious?

Who could have predicted to the famous African confessors and martyrs such as Cyprian, Felicity, Perpetua, and—greatest of all—Augustine, that we would one day add names so dear to us as Charles Lwanga and Mattias Mulumba Kalemba and their twenty companions? Nor must we forget those members of the Anglican Church who also died for the name of the Prince.

These African martyrs herald the dawn of a new age. If only the mind of man would be directed not toward persecutions and religious conflicts, but toward a rebirth of Christianity and civilization!

Africa has been washed by the blood of these latest martyrs, the first

of this new age (and, God willing, let them be the last, although such a holocaust is precious indeed). Africa is reborn free and independent.

The infamous crime by which these young men were put to death was so unspeakable and so expressive of the times. It shows us clearly that a new people needs a moral foundation, needs new spiritual customs firmly planted, to be handed down to posterity. Symbolically, this crime also reveals that a simple and rough way of life—enriched by many fine human qualities yet enslaved by its own weakness and corruption—must give way to a more civilized life wherein the higher expressions of the mind and better social conditions prevail.

We are warriors now, fighting on the battlefield of faith, and God sees all we do; then angels watch, and so does the Prince. What honor and glory and joy, to do battle in the presence of God, and to have the Prince approve our victory! Hallelujah!

Let us arm ourselves in full strength and prepare ourselves for the ultimate struggle with blameless hearts, true faith, and unyielding courage. What honor and glory and joy, to do battle in the presence of God, and to have the Prince approve our victory! Hallelujah!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you have made the blood of martyrs the seed of Christians, may the witness of St. Charles and his companions and their loyalty to the Prince in the face of torture inspire countless men and women to live the Christian faith. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in England about 673, he was first professed in the monastery at Exeter, but in 719 went to Germany to preach. He made many converts and was consecrated bishop of Mainz. He attracted many companions by whose help he founded or restored dioceses in Bavaria, Thuringia,

and Franconia. He also convened councils and promulgated laws. While preaching to the Frisians, he was killed in 754, and his body is buried in the monastery of Fulda.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Boniface*

In her voyage across the ocean of this world, the Church is like a huge ship pounded by the waves of life's different stresses. Our duty is to keep her on her course and not abandon her.

The ancient fathers showed us how we should carry out this duty: Clement, Cornelius, and many others in the city of Rome, Cyprian at Carthage, Athanasius at Alexandria, all lived under emperors who were pagans, and all steered the Prince's ship—or rather, his beloved spouse, the Church. They did this by teaching and defending her, by their work and their sufferings, even to the shedding of blood.

I am terrified when I think of all this. "Fear and trembling came upon me, and the darkness" of my sins "almost covered me." I would gladly give up the task of guiding the Church which I have accepted if I could find such an action warranted by the example of the fathers or by holy Scripture.

Since this is the case, and since the truth can be assaulted but never defeated or falsified, without our tired minds, let us turn to the words of Solomon: "Trust in the Master with all your heart, and do not rely on your own good judgment. Think of him in all your conduct, and he will guide your steps." In another place, he says, "The Master's name is an impregnable tower. A virtuous man seeks refuge in it, and he will be saved."

Let us stand firm in what is right and prepare our souls to face the test; let us wait upon God's strengthening aid, and say to him, "Dear Master, you have been our refuge in every generation."

Let us trust the one who has placed this burden upon us; let us bear with the Prince's help what we cannot bear ourselves, because he is omnipotent, and he tells us, "my harness does not chafe, and my burden is light."

Let us continue in the fight on the Master's day. "The days of anguish and agony" have overtaken us; and if God so wills, "let us die for the holy laws of our ancestors," so that we will be fit to obtain an eternal inheritance with them.

Let us be neither dogs that do not bark, nor silent onlookers, nor

paid servants who run away before the wolf; let us be careful shepherds instead, watching over the Prince's flock. Let us preach the whole of God's plan to the powerful and the humble, to rich and poor, to men of every rank and age, as far as God gives us the strength, at the proper time and the wrong time, as St. Gregory writes in his book of Pastoral Instruction.

I have longed to give you the good news, and more than that, to give you my very life; you have become that dear to me.

My infants, I am like a mother giving birth to you until the Prince takes shape in you; you have become that dear to me.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since your martyr Boniface spread the faith by his teaching and gave evidence of it by his blood, by the help of his prayers please keep us loyal to our faith and give us the courage to profess it in our lives. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in the duchy of Cleves around 1080. He was converted from a worldly life and entered the Religious state, and was ordained in 1115. He accepted the duty of preaching throughout France and Germany, and gathered together companions to found the Premonstratensian Order, for which he founded monasteries. Elected Archbishop of Magdeburg in 1126, he reformed the Christian life and spread the faith to nearby pagan nations. Died in 1134.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *Life of St. Norbert by a Premonstratensian*

Norbert is deservedly counted by historians among those who made an effective contribution to the reform movement under Gregory VII. He established a clergy dedicated to the ideals of the Good News and the Apostolic Church: to be chaste and poor. His clergy "wore the clothing

and the symbols of the new man; that is to say, they wore the religious habit and exhibited the dignity proper to the priesthood.” Norbert asked them “to live in accordance with the norms of Scripture with the Prince as their model.” They were “to be clean in all matters dealing with the altar and divine worship, to correct their faults and failings in their chapter meeting, and to care for and give shelter to the poor.”

The priests lived in community, where they continued the work of the Emissaries. Inspired by the practice of the early Church, Norbert urged the faithful to join the monastic life in some capacity; and so many men and women responded to the invitation that many asserted that no man since the Emissaries themselves had inspired so many to embrace the monastic life.

When Norbert was appointed Archbishop, he urged his brothers to carry the faith to the lands of the Wends. In his own diocese, he tried unsuccessfully to convince the clergy of the need for reform, and was confronted with noisy protests both in the streets and in church.

One of the principal goals of Norbert’s life was to foster harmony between the Apostolic See and the German Empire; at the same time, he wanted to maintain Rome’s freedom in ecclesiastical appointments. Apparently, his efforts were so successful that Pope Innocent II thanked him profusely in a letter in which he called him a “devoted son,” and Lothair made him chancellor of the realm.

Norbert did all these things with a steadfast faith: “Faith was the outstanding virtue of Norbert’s life, as charity had been the hallmark of Bernard of Clairvaux’s.” Affable and charming, amiable to one and all, “he was at ease in the company of the humble and the great alike.” Finally, he was a most eloquent preacher; after long meditation “he would teach the message of God, and with his fiery eloquence purge vices, refine virtues, and fill souls of good will with the warmth of wisdom.” He spent many hours in contemplation of the divine mysteries, and fearlessly spread the spiritual insights which were the fruit of his meditation.

Deliver the proclamation, at the right time and the wrong time; refute falsehood, correct errors, call to obedience, endure every hardship, and spread the Good News.

Keep watch over the whole flock which the Holy Spirit has given you

to rule and guide as a shepherd of the Church of God. Endure every hardship, and spread the Good News.

**Prayer**

Dear Father, since you made the bishop Norbert an outstanding servant of your Church, renowned for his preaching and pastoral zeal, please bestow always on your Church faithful shepherds to lead your people to eternal rescue. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

June 9



Born of a Christian family at Nisibis around 306. Ordained deacon, he exercised this office throughout the country and in Edessa, where he founded a theological school. Despite his ascetic life, he did not relax his ministries of preaching and writing books to refute the errors of his time. Died in 373.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Ephrem*

Master, shed on our darkened souls the brilliant light of your wisdom, so that we will be illuminated and serve you with renewed purity. Sunrise marks the hour for men to begin their labors; but in our souls, Master, please prepare a room for the day that will never end. Please give us the favor of coming to know the risen life, and having nothing distract us from the enjoyments you offer; set upon us the sign of your day that is not measured by the sun by our unceasing zeal for you.

In your sacrament we embrace you every day and receive you into our bodies; please make us fit to experience the return to life we hope for. We have had your treasure hidden within us ever since we received the grace of the Bath, and it grows richer and richer at your sacramental meals; please teach us to find our joy in your favor. Master, we have within us your memento, which we received during your spiritual dinner;



please let us possess it in its full reality when everything is made new.

We receive a glimpse of the beauty that is stored up for us when we gaze on the spiritual beauty your immortal will now creates within our mortal selves.

Dear Savior, your crucifixion marked the end of your mortal life; please teach us to crucify ourselves and make a path for our life in the Spirit. May your return to life, Jesus, bring true greatness to our spiritual selves and may your sacraments be the mirror in which we can know ourselves. Dear Savior, your divine plan for the world is a mirror of the spiritual world; please teach us to walk in that world as spiritual men.

Master, please do not deprive our souls of the spiritual vision of you, or our bodies of your warmth and pleasant presence. The mortality lurking in our bodies spreads decay through us; may the spiritual water of your love wash off the effects of mortality from our hearts. Grant us the favor, Master of being able to hurry toward our true city, and, like Moses on the mountaintop, possessing it now in vision.

He loved the Master with his whole heart and sang praises to his Maker every day. He chose musicians to stand before the altar to provide pleasant music for the psalms.

He did this for people to praise the Master's holy name, and for the sanctuary to resound with music from dawn to dusk. He chose musicians to stand before the altar to provide pleasant music for the psalms.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, in your love please fill our hearts with the Holy Spirit, who inspired the deacon Ephrem to sing the praise of your mysteries and gave him strength to serve only you. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

June 11  

**BARNABAS**  
 EMISSARY

Born in Cyprus, Barnabas was one of the first of the faithful in Jerusalem. He reported the Good News in Antioch, and accompanied St. Paul in his first missionary journey. He was also present at the Council of Jerusalem. He returned to his own country, where he died.

*Third Reading*

*A Treatise on Matthew by St. Chromatius*

“You are the world’s light. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, and people do not light a lamp only to put it under a basket; they put it on a stand where it gives light to the whole house.” The Master called his students the “earth’s salt,” because they seasoned with heavenly wisdom men’s hearts, which had been made to rot by the devil. Now he calls them the “world’s light” also, because they have been illuminated by him, the true and eternal light, and have themselves become a light in the darkness.

Since he is the Sun of Virtue, he appropriately calls his students the world’s light; the reason for this is that through them as if they were rays shining, he poured out the light of the knowledge of himself on the entire world. That is, by showing the light of truth, they have scattered the darkness of error from men’s hearts.

In addition, we have been illuminated by them also. We have been made into light out of darkness, as the Emissary says: “Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Master; behave yourselves like children of light.” He says another time, “You are not children of night or darkness; you are sons of light and day.”

St. John also properly asserts in his letter, “God is light,” and whoever has his home in God is in the light in the same way that God himself is in light. And so, because we find our happiness in being freed from the darkness of error, we should always act in the light like children of light. This is why the Emissary says, “You shine among them like light in the world, as you hold fast to the utterances that give life.”

If we fall short of living in the light, we will, to our condemnation and that of others, be covering up and darkening by our infidelity the light men so desperately need. As we know from Scripture, the man who

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received the talent should have made it produce a heavenly profit, but instead preferred to hide it rather than put it to work, and was punished as he deserved.

Therefore, that brilliant lamp which was lit for our rescue should always shine in us, because we have the lamp of the heavenly commandment and spiritual grace, to which David referred: "Your law is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path." Solomon also says this about it: "The command of the law is a lamp."

And so we must not hide this lamp of law and faith; we must set it up in Church, as if it were on a lampstand, for the rescue of many, many others, so that we will enjoy the light of truth itself and all believers will be illuminated by it.

When Barnabas arrived at Antioch and saw God's grace at work there, he was overjoyed, because he was a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and faith. Hallelujah!

He encouraged everyone to stand firm in their commitment to the Master, because he was a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and faith. Hallelujah!

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you filled St. Barnabas with faith and the Holy Spirit and sent him to convert the nations, please help us to report the Good News by our words and actions. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Lisbon, Portugal near the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. He joined the Canons Regular of St. Augustine, but transferred to the Franciscans after ordination to go to Africa. But his greatest success was in France and Italy converting heretics. He was the first to teach theology to his brothers. Died in Padua in 1231.

*Third Reading**A Sermon by St. Anthony of Padua*

A man who is filled with the Holy Spirit speaks in different languages. These different languages are different ways of giving evidence to the Prince: humility, poverty, patience, and obedience; we speak in those languages when we reveal these virtues in ourselves to our brothers. Actions speak louder than words; and so have your words teach and your actions speak. We are full of words and empty of actions, and that is why we are cursed by the Master, since he himself cursed the fig tree when he found only leaves and no fruit. Gregory says, "A law is imposed on preachers to practice what they preach." It is useless for a man to flaunt his knowledge of the law if he undermines his teaching by his actions.

But the Emissaries spoke "as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech." It is a blessing for a man to have his words issue from the Holy Spirit rather than himself. That is, some men speak as their own character dictates, and steal the words of others and present them as their own and claim credit for them. The Master refers to such men and others like them in Jeremiah: "'So then, I have a quarrel with the prophets,' says the Master, 'who have only to move their tongues to utter oracles. I have a quarrel with the prophets who make prophecies out of lying dreams, who relate them and lead my people astray with their lies and pretensions. I was certainly not the one who sent them or commissioned them, and they serve no good purpose for this people,' says the Master."

So we should speak as the Holy Spirit gives us the gift of speech. Our humble and sincere request to the Spirit for ourselves should be that we bring the day of Pentecost to fulfillment, insofar as he infuses us with his grace, by using our bodily senses in a perfect way and by keeping the commandments. In the same way, we are to request to be filled with a keen sense of sorrow and with tongues of fire for proclaiming the faith, so that the reward we earn will be to stand in the blazing splendor of the saints and look on the triune God.

A virtuous man blossoms like a lily; he will flourish forever in the courts of our God.

He will be praised by all God's chosen; he will flourish forever in the courts of our God.

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### Prayer

Omnipotent God, since you gave St. Anthony to your people as an outstanding preacher and an available helper in time of need, may we follow the Prince's Good News with his assistance and know the help of your grace in every difficulty. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Ravenna in the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. He became a hermit and traveled through various lands looking for solitude and establishing small monasteries as he practiced monastic virtues. He fought strenuously against the depraved habits of the monks of his day. Died around 1027.

### *Third Reading*

### *Life of St. Romuald by St. Peter Damian*

Romuald lived in the vicinity of the city of Parenzo for three years. In the first year, he built a monastery and appointed an abbot with monks, and for the next two years remained there in seclusion. In that setting, divine holiness transported him to such a summit of perfection that, as he was breathed upon by the Holy Spirit, he foresaw many future events and comprehended with the rays of his intellect hidden mysteries of the Old and New Testaments.

He was frequently seized by so great a contemplation of divinity that he would be reduced to tears with the boiling, indescribable heat of divine love. In this condition, he would cry out, "My beloved Jesus! The sweet honey which I love, my indescribable longing, the saints' pleasure, delight of the angels!" and other things of this kind. We are unable to express the ecstasy of these utterances, which were dictated by the Holy Spirit.

Wherever the man arranged to live, he would follow the same pattern. First, he would build an oratory with an altar in a cell; then he would shut himself in and forbid access.

Finally, after he had lived in many places and perceived that his end was near, he returned to the monastery he had built in the valley of Castro. While he was waiting for his approaching certain death, he ordered a cell to be constructed there with an oratory in which he could isolate himself and preserve silence until death.

And so the hermitage was built, since he had made up his mind that he would die there. His body began to grow more and more oppressed with pains, and was already failing, not so much from weakness as from the exhaustion of extreme age. One day, he began to feel the loss of his physical strength under all the harassment of increasingly severe pains, and as the sun was beginning to set, he instructed two monks who were standing by to go out and close the cell door behind them, and to come back to celebrate his matins.

They were so concerned about his end that they were loath to go out, and did not rest immediately; and, in fact, since they were worried that their master would die, they remained hidden near the cell and watched this priceless treasure. For some time they kept listening carefully until they heard neither movement nor sound, and then, correctly guessing what had happened, they pushed open the door and rushed in quickly, lit a candle, and found the holy man lying on his back, after his blessed soul had been plucked up to heaven. As he lay there, he seemed like a neglected pearl from heaven that was soon to be given a place of honor in the treasury of the King of kings.

The Master has blessed you in everything you have done; he has watched over your progress as you journeyed through the vast desert. The Master, your God, has been with you and no need of yours has been forgotten.

The Master, your God, was correcting you in the way a father teaches his son. The Master, your God, has been with you and no need of yours has been forgotten.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since through St. Romuald you renewed the life of solitude and prayer in your Church, please bring us the joy of heaven as by our self-denial we follow the Prince. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and

the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born of the princely family of Castiglione in 1568 near Mantua in Lombardy. Under the instruction in piety of his mother, he showed an inclination for the religious life; he deeded over his share of his ancestral dominion to his brother and entered the Society of Jesus. While serving the sick during a plague, he contracted the disease and died in 1591.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter to his Mother by St. Aloysius*

May the comfort and grace of the Holy Spirit be yours forever, my most honored lady. Your letter found me still lingering in this region of the dead; but now I have to rouse myself to make my way finally to heaven and praise God forever in the land of the living; in fact, I had hoped that before this time, my journey there would be over. If love, as St. Paul says, means “to weep with those who weep and enjoy oneself with those who are having fun,” then, my dear mother I love, you will be extremely happy that God in his grace and love for you is showing me that path to true happiness, and assuring me that I will never lose him.

The goodness of God, my most honored lady, is a fathomless and shoreless ocean, and I admit that when I plunge my mind into thoughts of this, it is carried away by the immensity, and feels completely lost and bewildered there. In return for my short and feeble labors, God is calling me to eternal rest; his voice invites me out of heaven to the infinite bliss I have looked for so lazily, and promises me the reward for the tears I have so seldom shed.

Please take care above everything, my most honored lady, not to insult God’s boundless loving kindness; and you would certainly do this if you mourned as dead someone who is living face to face with God, and one whose prayers can bring you in your troubles more powerful help than they ever could on earth. And our parting will not be for long; we will see each other again in heaven, where we will be united with our Savior; and there we will praise him with heart and soul, sing of his

mercies forever, and enjoy eternal happiness. When he takes away what he once lent us, his purpose is to store our treasure somewhere else more safely and bestow on us those very blessings that we would ourselves most choose to have.

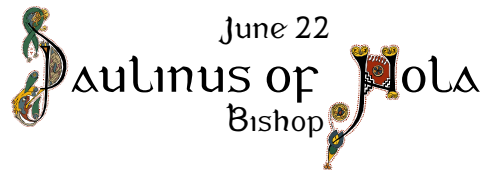
I am writing all this with the single desire to have you and all my family consider my leaving a joy and favor, and for you particularly to speed my passage across the water with a mother's blessing until I reach the shore where all our hopes belong. I am all that much happier to write because I have no clearer way of expressing the love and respect I owe you as your son.

You maintained me because of my innocence; you let me stand in your sight forever.

I would rather be lying at the threshold of my God's house than live in the tents of evil people. You let me stand in your sight forever.

#### Prayer

Dear Father of love and giver of everything good, since in St. Aloysius you combined remarkable innocence with the spirit of penance, may those of us who have not followed his innocence by the help of his prayers follow his example of penance. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Bordeaux, France, in 355. Became a civil servant, married, with a son. He later received the Bath and gave up all worldly goods to live a monastic life in 393 in Nola, Campagna. Later he became bishop of Nola, promoted the cult of St. Felix, assisted pilgrims, and helped the unfortunate, as well as composed poems. Died in 431.

#### *Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Paulinus of Nola*

You have shown, my Master, that you have within you true affection



and perfect love for this insignificant person. Since you are truly holy and have earned the blessings given you, you are a friend everyone would desire; I know this because my cousin Julian on his return from Carthage gave us the letter which conveyed the shining light of your sanctity to us. And so it seems to me that it is not simply now that I have come to know your love for me, it is that I am now recognizing it as something I was already aware of.

That is, it is obvious that this love of yours emanated from the one “who predestined us for himself from the foundation of the world.” We were made in him, the maker of everything that is to be, before we were born, because “he made us; it was not ourselves who did.” So since we have been formed by his work and his foreknowledge, we were already joined by love into a similarity of wills and a union of faith—or a faith of unity—that preceded our present acquaintance. That is, before we met in person, we became known to each other in the revelation of the Spirit.

That is why I am grateful and proud in the Master, who is one and the same throughout the world and produces his love in his people through the Holy Spirit, whom he pours upon everything material. With the river’s flow, he gladdens his city, and among its citizens he acted properly in setting you up as “the first among the authorities over his people” in your apostolic see. In the same way, he wanted me, a man he lifted up when he was downtrodden, and raised from the dirt when he was destitute, to be included among your associates. But I am more grateful for that gift of the Master by which he made a place for me in your heart, and allowed me to penetrate your affections enough so that I could claim a personal trust in your love. Because I am touched by this much kindness and these gifts, I could not love you in a merely casual or negligent way.

But you should know everything about me, and you should be aware that I am a sinner, and have been so for a long time. It is not so far back that I was “led out of darkness and the shadow of death”; I have only recently begun to breathe in the air of life, and I have only recently put my hand to the plow and taken up the Prince’s cross. I need help from your prayers to persevere to the end; and if you were to lighten my burden by speaking a word for me, this is the reward that will be an addition to what you deserve, because a holy man who helps a worker (I do not dare call myself a brother) “will be elevated like a great city.”

We have sent you a loaf of bread in token of our unity; it also symbolizes the reality of the Trinity. By your accepting it, you will make it a blessing loaf.

It is wonderful for a man to be found to be without fault, not making gold his life's object, or putting his trust in wealth. His future in the Master will be secure.

He was able to sin, but did not; he was able to do wrong, but did not. His future in the Master will be secure.

Prayer

Dear Master, since you made St. Paulinus famous for his love of poverty and concern for his people, may those of us who celebrate his witness to the Good News please imitate his example of love for others. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



St. John Fisher was born in 1469, studied theology at Cambridge, England, and was ordained and appointed bishop of Rochester, where he led an austere life, composed works refuting errors, and frequently visited the faithful.

St. Thomas More was born in 1477 and educated at Oxford. He married, had one son and three daughters. While chancellor at the king's court, he wrote works on governance and in defense of the faith.

Both were beheaded in 1535 by King Henry VIII, whom they had resisted in the matter of his divorce: John Fisher on June 22, and Thomas More on July 6. Bishop Fisher was made Cardinal by Pope Paul III.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter from Prison to his Daughter  
by St. Thomas More*

Also June 22: John Fisher, Bishop, Martyr, 179  
Thomas More, Martyr

Though I am well aware, Margaret, that because of my past wrongdoing I deserve to be abandoned by God, I cannot but trust in his merciful goodness. His grace has strengthened me until now and made me content to lose goods, lands, and even life rather than swear against my conscience. God's grace has given the king a gracious frame of mind towards me, so that as yet he has taken from me nothing but my liberty. In doing this, His Majesty has done me such good with respect to spiritual benefit that I trust that among all the great blessings he has heaped so plentifully on me, I consider my imprisonment the very greatest.

And so I cannot mistrust the grace of God. Either he will keep the king in that gracious frame of mind to continue to do me no harm, or else, if it is his pleasure that for my other sins I suffer in this case something which I do not deserve, then his grace will give me the strength to bear it patiently, and perhaps even gladly.

By what he earned in the bitterness of his suffering joined to mine and far surpassing anything I could earn by suffering myself, his bountiful goodness will release me from the pains of purgatory and will increase my reward in heaven besides.

I will not mistrust him, Meg, though I will feel myself weakening and on the verge of being overcome with fear. I will remember how St. Peter began to sink at a blast of wind because of his lack of faith, and I will do as he did: call upon the Prince and pray to him for help. And then I trust he will place his holy hand on me and hold me up from drowning in the stormy seas.

And if he permits me to play St. Peter further and to fall to the ground and to swear and forswear, may God our Master in his tender mercy keep me from this, and let me lose if it happens in this way, and never win by it! Still, if this should happen, afterward I trust that in his goodness he will look on me with pity as he did upon St. Peter, and make me stand up again and confess the truth of my conscience afresh and endure here the shame and harm of my own fault.

And finally, Margaret, I know this well: that without my fault, he will not let me be lost. I will, therefore, with good hope commit myself wholly to him. And if he permits me to perish for my faults, then I will serve as praise for his justice. But in good faith, Meg, I trust that his

tender pity will keep my poor soul safe and make me commend his mercy.

And therefore, my own good daughter, do not let your mind be troubled over anything that will happen to me in this world. Nothing can come but what God wills. And I am very sure that whatever that is, however bad it may seem, it will in fact be the best.

When the martyrs of the Prince were suffering, they turned their minds to heavenly things, and cried, "Please help us, Master, to complete your work without wavering."

Please look down upon your servants and upon the works of your hands. Please help us, Master, to complete your work without wavering.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you confirm true faith with the crown of martyrdom, may the prayers of Sts. John Fisher and Thomas More please give us the courage to proclaim our faith by the witness of our lives. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

June 24:

Birth of

John the Baptist

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Sermon by St. Augustine*

The Church observes the birth of John as a sacred event. We have no such commemoration of any other fathers; but it is significant that we celebrate the birthdays of John and Jesus. This day cannot be overlooked. And even if my explanation does not match the dignity of the feast, you may still meditate on it with great depth and benefit.

John was born from a woman too old for childbirth; the Prince was born from a young virgin. The news of John's birth was met with incredulity, and his father was struck dumb; the Prince's birth was believed, and he was conceived through faith.

This is the subject, as I have presented it, for our inquiry and discussion. But as I said before, if I do not have either the time or the ability to study the implications of so profound a mystery, the one who is speaking within you even when I am not here will teach you better; he is the one you contemplate with devotion, the one you welcomed into your hearts, and the one whose temples you have become.

John, then, appears as the boundary between the two Treaties, the old and the new one. The Prince himself provides the evidence that he is a sort of boundary, when he speaks of "the law and the prophets up until John the Bather." Thus, he represents times past and is the herald of the new era to come.

As a representative of the past, he is born to aged parents; as a herald of the new era, he is declared to be a prophet while still in his mother's womb—because while he was still unborn, he leaped in his mother's womb at the arrival of blessed Mary. In that womb, he had already been appointed prophet, even before he was born; it was revealed that he was to be the Prince's precursor, before they ever saw each other. These are divine events, going beyond the limits of our human frailty. Eventually he is born and receives his name, and his father's tongue is set free. See how these events reflect reality.

Zechariah is silent and loses his voice until John, the Master's precursor, is born and restores his voice. The silence of Zechariah is nothing but the age of prophecy hiding, being obscured, so to speak and concealed before the Prince's preaching. At John's arrival, Zechariah's voice is released, and it becomes clear at the coming of the one who was foretold. The release of Zechariah's voice at the birth of John is a parallel to the tearing of the veil at the Prince's crucifixion. If John were announcing his own coming, Zechariah's lips would not have been opened. The tongue is freed because a voice is born. That is, when John was preaching the Master's coming, he was asked who he was, and he answered, "I am a voice calling in the wilderness." The voice is John, but the Master "in the beginning was the Word." John was a voice that lasted only for a while; the Prince, the Word in the beginning, is eternal.

You, my child, will be called the Supreme Being's prophet, because you will precede the Master to prepare his path.

To give his people knowledge of their rescue by the forgiveness of their sins because you will precede the Master to prepare his way.

Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,

## June 27: Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop, Doctor

and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Born in 370 and lived a monastic life. He succeeded his uncle as bishop of Alexandria in 412. He was preeminent in the Council of Ephesus, and fought bravely against the teaching of Nestorius, as well as writing many learned works explaining and defending the faith. Died in 444.

### *Third Reading*

### *A Letter by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

It fills me with astonishment that anyone could doubt the right of the holy Virgin to be called the Mother of God. Obviously, she must be the mother of God if our Master Prince Jesus is God, and she gave birth to him. Our Master's students may not have used those exact words, but they handed on to us the belief that those words enshrine, and this has also been taught to us by the holy fathers.

In the third book of his treatise on the holy and single-reality Trinity, our Father Athanasius, whose memory is glorious, refers to the Virgin several times as "Mother of God." I cannot resist quoting his very words: "As I have often told you, the distinctive mark of Holy Scripture is that it was written to make a double statement about our Savior: that he is and always has been God, since he is the Word, Radiance, and Wisdom of the Father; and that for our sake in these last days he took flesh from the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and became man."

Again, further on, he says, "There have been many holy men, free from all sin. Jeremiah was sanctified in his mother's womb, and while John was still in the womb, he leaped for joy at the voice of Mary, the Mother of God." Athanasius is a man we can trust, one who deserves our

complete confidence, because he taught nothing contrary to the sacred books.

The divinely inspired Scriptures affirm that the Word of God became flesh, which is to say that he was united to a human body endowed with a rational soul. He undertook to help the descendants of Abraham by fashioning a body for himself from a woman and sharing our flesh and blood, to enable us to see in him not only God, but also, by reason of this union, a man like ourselves.

It is held, therefore, that there are in Emmanuel two realities: divinity and humanity. Yet our Master Prince Jesus is nevertheless one thing, the one true Son, both God and man; not a deified man on the same footing as those who share the divine nature by grace, but true God, who for our sake appeared in human form. We are assured of this by St. Paul's declaration: "When the time became complete, God sent his Son, born from a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, and to enable us to be adopted as sons."

This holy man performed miracles in the sight of God; he praised the Master with his whole heart. May he plead for sinful mankind.

This priest of the Master meditated on his commandments day and night. May he plead for sinful mankind.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since the bishop Cyril courageously taught that Mary was the Mother of God, may those of us who cherish this belief receive rescue through the incarnation of your Son the Prince, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born around 130, and educated in Smyrna. He became a student of St. Polycarp, bishop of that city. In 177, he was ordained at Lyons in France and shortly afterward became bishop of that city. He composed works



defending the faith against the Gnostics, and it is said that he was martyred around 200.

*Third Reading*

*Treatise against Heresies by St. Irenaeus*

God's glory gives life, and those who see God receive life; and this is why God, who cannot be grasped, comprehended, or seen, allows himself to be seen, comprehended and grasped by human beings, so that he can give life to those who see and accept him. It is impossible to live without life, and the activity of life comes from sharing in God, while sharing in God is seeing God and enjoying his goodness.

And so men will see God if they are to live; through the vision of God, they become immortal and attain to God himself. As I have said, this was shown in symbols by the prophets; God will be seen who are carriers of his Spirit and are always waiting for his coming. As Moses said in the Book of Deuteronomy, "On that day we will see, because God will speak to human beings, and human beings will live."

God is the source of all activity throughout creation; but he cannot be seen or described in his own nature and in all his greatness by any of his creatures. Through his Word, the whole of creation learns that there is one God the Father, who sustains everything and gives them existence; as it is written in the Good News, "No human being has ever seen God except the only Son God ever fathered, who is in the bosom of the Father; and he has revealed him."

From the beginning, the Son is the one who has been teaching us about the Father; he is with the Father from the beginning. He was to reveal to the human race visions of prophecy, the diversity of spiritual gifts, his own ways of service, and the glorification of the Father, all in their proper order and harmony, at the time designated for our instruction. Where there is order, there is also harmony; where there is harmony, there is correct timing; and where there is correct timing, there is benefit.

The Word became the steward of the Father's grace for the benefit of human beings, for whose advantage he made such marvelous arrangements. He revealed God to human beings and presented human beings to God. He safeguarded the invisibility of the Father to prevent human beings from treating God with contempt, and to set before them a constant goal to make progress toward.

On the other side, he revealed God to human beings and made him visible in many ways to prevent human beings from being totally separated from God and so ceasing to exist. Life in man is the glory of God; human life is the vision of God. If the revelation of God through creation gives life to everyone who lives on the earth, it is even more true that the manifestation of the Father through the Word gives life to those who see God.

True teaching was in his mouth; no evil was found on his lips. He walked with me in goodness and peace.

My hand will be a steady help to him; my arm will give him strength. He walked with me in goodness and peace.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you called St. Irenaeus to support your truth and bring peace to your Church, please renew us by his prayers in faith and love so that we will always be focused on fostering unity and peace. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Sermon by St. Augustine*

This day has been sanctified by the suffering of the blessed Emissaries Peter and Paul. And so we are not talking about some obscure martyrs, “because their voice has gone out to the whole world, and their message has reached the ends of the earth.” These martyrs put into practice what they taught: they pursued virtue, acknowledged the truth, and died for it.

St. Peter, the first of the Emissaries and a fervent lover of the Prince, deserved to hear these words, “I tell you that you are Rock,” because he had said, “You are the Prince, the Son of the living God.” Then the

Prince said, “And I tell you that you are Rock, and this is the rock on which I will build my Church.” This is the rock on which I will build the faith that you now acknowledge, and on your words, “You are the Prince, the Son of the living God,” I will build my Church. That is, you are Peter, and the name Peter comes from *petra*, the word for “rock,” and not vice versa. “Peter,” therefore, comes from *petra*, just as “Christian” comes from “Christ.”

As you know, Jesus chose his students before his suffering and called them his Emissaries; and among these almost everywhere Peter alone had the right to represent the whole Church; and because of that role which he alone had, he had the right to hear the words, “I will give the keys of heaven’s kingdom to you.” That is, it was not one man who received the keys, but the entire Church considered as one. Now to the extent that he represented the unity and universality of the Church, Peter’s preeminence is clear from the words, “I give to you,” because what was given was given to everyone. That is, the fact that it was the Church that received the keys of the Kingdom of God is clear from what the Master says elsewhere to all the Emissaries: “Accept the Holy Spirit,” immediately adding, “If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven for him, and if you hold him to them, they remain with him.”

It was, then, appropriate for the Master after his resurrection to entrust Peter with the feeding of his sheep. Yet he was not the only student to have the right to feed the Master’s sheep; it is that the Prince, in speaking only to one, suggests the unity of all the Emissaries; and so he speaks to Peter, because Peter is first among the Emissaries. And so, do not be discouraged, Peter; reply once, reply again; reply a third time. The triple acknowledgment of your love is to regain what was lost three times by your fear. You must untie three times what you tied up three times; you must free by love what your fear bound. Once, again, and a third time did the Master entrust his sheep to Peter.

Both Emissaries share the same feast day, because these two were one; and even though they suffered on different days, they were, so to speak, a unit. Peter went first, and Paul followed. And so we celebrate this day sanctified for us by the Emissaries’ blood; let us embrace what they believed, their lives, their work, their sufferings, their preaching, and their acknowledgment of the faith.

Blessed Emissary Paul, preacher of the truth and teacher of the Gentiles,

you certainly deserve praise.

Through you all peoples have come to know God's grace; you certainly deserve praise.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you give us the joy today of celebrating the feast of the Emissaries Peter and Paul, through whom your Church first received the faith, please keep us true to their teaching. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;

And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.

June 30  
 FIRST MARTYRS OF ROME

In the first persecution against the Church, begun by Nero after the burning of Rome in 64, many of the faithful were tortured and killed. Tacitus refers to these events in *Annales* (15, 44), as does the bishop of Rome Clement in his letter to the Corinthians (ch. 5-6).

*Third Reading*

*A Letter to the Corinthians, by Clement I*

Let us leave behind examples from olden times and come to those who struggled closest to us; let us consider the noble models of our own generation. It was through jealousy and envy that the greatest and most upstanding pillars of the Church were persecuted and struggled even to death. We should set before our eyes the good Emissaries: first of all, Peter, who because of irrational jealousy, suffered, and not merely once or twice but many times, and, after he had given his evidence in this way, went to the place of glory that he earned. It was through jealousy and conflict that Paul showed the way to the prize for perseverance; he was put in chains seven times, sent into exile, and stoned, and as a herald both in the east and west, he achieved a noble reputation by his faith. He taught virtue to the whole world, and, when he reached the limits of the

western world, he gave his evidence before those in authority; and then he left this world and was taken up into the holy place as a superb example of endurance.

A great throng of the chosen gathered around these men with their holy lives; and, though they too were victims of jealousy, they gave us the finest examples of endurance in the midst of many indignities and tortures. Through jealousy, women like Dirce or the daughters of Danaus were tortured and suffered terrible, unholy acts of violence. But they courageously finished the course of faith and, despite the weakness of their bodies, won a noble prize. It was jealousy that separated wives from husbands, and violated the words of our father Adam, "This is now bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh." Jealousy and conflict have overturned great cities and uprooted mighty nations.

We are writing this, my friends, not only as a warning to you, but as a reminder to ourselves too; because we are thrown into the same arena, and the same struggle is there before us. And so we ought to put aside futile, useless concerns and go straight to the glorious, venerable norm which is our tradition, and we should consider what is good, pleasing, and acceptable in the sight of the one who made us. Let us fix our gaze on the Prince's blood, and realize how valuable it is to his Father, since it was shed for our rescue and brought the grace of a change of mind to the whole world.

They gave their bodies up to be tortured for their faith in God, and so they earned an eternal reward.

They have undergone great persecution and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and so they earned an eternal reward.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you sanctified the Church of Rome with the blood of its first martyrs, may we please find strength from their courage and happiness in their triumph. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

July 1  
Blessed Junipero SERRA  
Priest

Born Nov. 24, 1713, in Baleari Major Island, given the name Peter. He entered the Franciscans at Palma, Majorca in 1730, and was ordained in 1736. In April, 1749, he went to Mexico, where he preached to the natives and founded missions. He entered California on July 1 1736, and founded nine missions along the California coast from San Diego to San Francisco. Died in Monterey on August 28, 1784 in the mission of St. Charles Borromeo, which he founded.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Leo the Great*

My friends, I am weak and lazy too in fulfilling the obligations of my office; whenever I try to act with vigor and devotion, the frailty of our human condition slows me down. Yet I share in the ever-present atoning work of that omnipotent and eternal high priest, who is like us and yet equal to the Father, and who brought divinity down to our human level and raised our humanity to divinity. It is only proper for us, then, to celebrate what he established, because, even though he delegated the care of his sheep to a great number of shepherds, he keeps watch in person over the flock he loves dearly.

It is from this ultimate inexhaustible source of security that we have received strength in our apostolic work; because his activity never abates. The powerful foundation on which the whole structure of the Church rests is never shaken by the weight of the temple that presses down on it.

The faith that the Prince praised in the head of the Emissaries remains unshaken forever. And, in the same way that Peter's faith in the Prince lasts forever, so does the Prince's foundation upon Peter. The structure of truth persists; blessed Peter keeps his rock-like strength, and has not abandoned the helm of the Church which he assumed.

Peter is called the rock; he is declared to be the foundation; he was appointed doorkeeper of the kingdom of heaven; he became judge of what is to be locked and unlocked, and his decisions keep their force even in heaven. In these various ways, he is assigned a rank above the others; and by reflecting on the hidden meaning of these titles he has, we can come to appreciate how close he is to the Prince.

In our day, he carries out his trust over a wider field, and with greater power; he attends to every facet of his duties and responsibilities along with the one who gave him that dignity.

And so, if I do anything well, if my judgment is healthy, and if I obtain anything from God's mercy by my daily prayer, all this is due to the achievement and what Peter earned; it is his power that lives on in his See, and it is his prestige that is seated on the throne.

This my friends, is the outcome of that profession of faith which God the Father inspired in the Emissary's heart. That declaration rose above the doubts of all merely human opinion, and took on the solidity of a rock unshaken by outside pressure.

That is, in the world-wide Church, Peter declares every day, "You are the Prince, the Son of the living God," and every man who acknowledges the Master is enabled to proclaim what these words mean.

Jesus said to Simon, "Amen I tell you that you are Peter, and I will build my Church on the foundation of this rock, and the powers of the world below will never close in on it."

For all eternity, God's Church stands firm, and the powers of the world below will never close in on it.

#### Prayer

Dear Supreme God, since your servant Junipero Serra brought the Good News about the Prince to the peoples of Mexico and California and firmly established the Church among them, please inspire us by his intercession and through the example of his evangelical zeal to be faithful witnesses of Prince Jesus, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Thomas is said to have reported the Good News in India. Since the fourth century the celebration of the transference of his body to Edessa has been commemorated on July 3.



*Third Reading**A Homily on the Good News  
by St. Gregory the Great*

“Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came.” He was the only student not there, and on his return, he heard what had happened but refused to believe it. The Master then came a second time; he offered his side for the skeptical student to touch; he held out his hands showing the scars of his wounds, and healed the wound of his skepticism.

My dear friends, what do you see in these events? Do you really believe that it was by chance that this chosen student was absent, and then came and heard, heard and disbelieved, disbelieved and touched, and touched and believed? It was God’s providence, not chance. In a marvelous way, God’s mercy arranged that the disbelieving student would, in touching the wounds of his Master’s body, heal our wounds of disbelief. The disbelief of Thomas has done more for our faith than the faith of the other students; as he touches the Prince and is won over to belief, every doubt is discarded and our faith is strengthened; so the student who disbelieved and then felt the Prince’s wounds becomes evidence for the reality of the resurrection.

When he touched the Prince, he cried, “My Master and my God!” Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me, Thomas.” Paul said, “Faith is the reality of what is hoped for, and the evidence of what is unseen.” It is clear, then, that faith is the proof of what cannot be seen. What is seen gives knowledge, not faith. When Thomas saw and touched, why was he told, “You believe because you have seen me”? Because what he saw and what he believed were different things. God cannot be seen by mortal man; Thomas saw a human being, whom he acknowledged to be God, and said, “My Master and my God.” When he saw, he believed; as he looked at someone who was truly man, he cried out that this was God, the God he could not see.

What follows gives us a reason for great joy: “Admire those who have believed without seeing.” Here there is a particular reference to us; we hold in our hearts someone we have not seen in the flesh. We are included in these words—but only if we follow up our faith with good actions. A true believer practices what he believes; but for those who only pay lip service to faith, Paul has this to say: “They claim to know God, but they repudiate him in their actions.” And that is why James says, “Faith without actions is dead.”

This life became visible; we have seen it and we are announcing it to you; it is the eternal life which was in existence with the Father and has appeared to us.

We have seen it with our own eyes and have touched the Word of life with our own hands; and we report to you what we have seen and heard; it is the eternal life which was in existence with the Father and has appeared to us.

*Prayer*

Omnipotent Father, as we honor the Emissary Thomas, may we please always experience the help of his prayers, and may we have eternal life by believing in Jesus, whom Thomas acknowledged as Master, since he is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 “Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.

I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

July 4

## Elizabeth of Portugal

Born to the Aragonese royal family in 1271. She married the King of Portugal and bore two children. She endured hardship and trouble through prayer and works of charity. When her husband died, she distributed her property to the poor and took the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis. Died in 1336

### *Third Reading*

### *A Sermon by St. Peter Chrysologus (?)*

“It is a good thing for people to be peacemakers,” the evangelist said, my very dear brothers, “because they will be called God’s children.” True Christian virtues grow in a person who enjoys the unchangeable possession of Christian peace, and no one comes to the title of a child of God except through the title of peacemaker.

Peace, my very dear brothers, rescues a man from slavery, provides him with the name of a free man, and changes his identity with God along with his condition, from a servant to a son, and from a slave to a free man. Peace among brothers is the will of God, the Prince’s joy, the completion of holiness, the regulation of virtue, the teacher of truth, the guardian of morals, and a praiseworthy training in every way. Peace lends strength to our prayers; it is the way our pleas can reach God easily and be taken note of; it is the fullness which completes our desires.

Peace is the mother of love, the bond of harmony, and the evident sign of a pure soul, one which is trying to please God, and one which is trying to be fulfilled and has its desire rewarded. Peace must be preserved in accordance with the Master’s orders, as the Prince said, “I leave you peace; my peace is what I give you”—that is, I am to find you in peace as I left you in peace. As the Prince left the world, he wished to leave the gift he wanted to find when he returned.

We have a commandment from heaven to keep his gift; his one utterance is, “I will find what I left.” The planting of peace in the root is from God, but the uprooting is from the enemy; because, just as

brotherly love comes from God, hatred comes from the devil; and so we must condemn our hatred of others, because it is written that “anyone who hates his brother is a murderer.”

Now you see, my very dear brothers, why we should love peace and cultivate harmony; because they engender and nurture love. But you also know from the Emissary John that “love comes from God,” and whoever is not with God does not possess love.

And so, my brothers, let us keep the commandments, which are life for us; let us carry on together the obligations of our brotherhood in profound peace; let us bind each other together with ties of the love that rescues us—in this mutual love that “covers a great many sins.” Love ought to be embraced with the grasp of all our desires, since the benefits it provides amount to as many rewards. We must keep peace before all other virtues, since God is always in peace.

Love peace, and the whole world will be calm and quiet. By doing so, you store up rewards for me, and joy for yourselves, so that God’s Church will have as its foundation the bond of peace and will adhere to perfect observance in the Prince.

Share your bread with the hungry, and take the poor and homeless into your own house; then your light will break out like the dawn, and your holiness will precede you.

When you see a man who is naked, give him clothes, and do not scorn your brother; then your light will break out like the dawn, and your holiness will precede you.

#### Prayer

Dear Father of peace and love, since you gave St. Elizabeth the gift of reconciling enemies, please give us by the help of her prayers the courage to work for peace among men, so that we will be called children of God. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Cremona, Lombardy in 1502. He studied medicine at Padua, and was ordained and founded the Society of Clerics of St. Paul, also called the Barnabites. The Society helped greatly in reforming the morals of the faithful. Died in 1539.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon to the Members of the Society  
by St. Anthony Zaccaria*

“We are fools for the Prince”; our holy guide and greatly honored patron was speaking of himself and the rest of the Emissaries, and about the other people who profess the Christian and apostolic way of life. But there is no reason, my dear brothers, why we should be surprised or afraid; “because a student is not greater than his teacher or a slave greater than his master.” We should love and feel kindness toward those who oppose us and not hate and despise them, since they are harming themselves and doing us good, and are adorning us with laurel crowns of everlasting glory while they are awakening God’s anger against themselves.

And even more than this, we should pray for them and not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with goodness. We should heap good deeds “like red-hot coals” of burning love “upon their heads,” as our Emissary urges us to do, so that when they become aware of our tolerance and gentleness, they will undergo a change of attitude and be prompted to turn in love to God.

In his mercy, God has chosen us, even though we do not deserve it, out of this world, to serve him and in this way advance in goodness and bear the greatest possible harvest of love in patience. We should take encouragement not only from the hope of sharing in the glory of God’s children, but from the hardships we undergo too.

“Consider your calling,” my dear brothers; if we want to think carefully about it, we will see easily enough that its foundation demands that those of us who have started out to follow—admittedly, from far

behind—the footsteps of the holy Emissaries and the other soldiers of the Prince should not be reluctant to share in their sufferings as well. “We should keep running steadily in the race we have started, not losing sight of Jesus, who is leading us in our faith and bringing it to completion.” And so, since we have chosen such a great Emissary as our guide and father, and since we claim to follow him, we should try to put his teaching and example into practice in our lives. This great a leader should not be served by faint-hearted troops, and such a parent should not find his sons unworthy of him.

I have reported faith in our Master Prince Jesus, and now I am not afraid of any danger. I do not consider my life more valuable than my work, which is to finish the race I am running: the task of reporting and announcing the Good News of God’s favor.

I am not ashamed of the Good News. I do not consider my life more valuable than my work, which is to finish the race I am running: the task of reporting and announcing the Good News of God’s favor.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, please let us grasp in the spirit of St. Paul the sublime wisdom of Prince Jesus, which inspired St. Anthony Zaccaria to report the message of rescue to your Church. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born to a poor family in Corinaldi, Italy in 1890. She spent a difficult childhood helping her mother with housework, and was pious and often at prayer. In 1902, she was stabbed to death as the alternative to being raped.

#### *Third Reading*

*A homily at the Canonization of Maria Goretti  
by Pius XII*

It is well known how this young girl had to face a bitter struggle,

with no way to defend herself. A vicious stranger burst on her without warning, intent on raping her and destroying her childlike purity. In that moment of crisis, she could have spoken to her Redeemer in the words of that classic *Imitation of Christ*, “Though tested and plagued by a host of misfortunes, I have no fear as long as your grace is with me. It is my strength: stronger than any opponent; it helps me and gives me guidance.” She surrendered herself to God and his grace with splendid courage, and so gave her life to protect her virginity.

The life of this simple girl—I will concern myself only with highlights—we can see deserves heaven. Even today, people can look on it with admiration and respect; parents can learn from her story how to raise their God-given children in virtue, courage, and holiness; they can learn to train them in the Catholic faith so that, when they are put to the test, God’s grace will support them and they will come through undefeated, unscathed, and untarnished.

From Maria’s story, carefree children and young people with their zest for life can learn not to be led astray by attractive pleasures which are not only ephemeral and empty but sinful. Instead, they can fix their sights on achieving Christian and moral perfection, however difficult and hazardous that course may prove. With determination and God’s help, all of us can attain that goal by persistent effort and prayer.

Not all of us are expected to die a martyr’s death, but we are all called to the pursuit of Christian virtue. This demands strength of character, though it may not match that of this innocent girl. Still, a constant, persistent, and relentless effort is asked of us right up to the moment of our death. This may be conceived as a slow, steady martyrdom which the Prince urged upon us when he said, “The Kingdom of Heaven is set upon and ravaged by violent forces.”

So let us all, with God’s grace, exert ourselves to reach the goal that the example of the virgin martyr, St. Maria Goretti, sets before us. Through her prayers to the Redeemer may all of us, each in his own way, joyfully try to follow the inspiring example of Maria Goretti, who now enjoys eternal happiness in heaven.

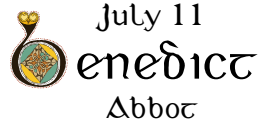
How beautiful you are, virgin of the Prince; the Master has given you the gift of perpetual virginity.

Nothing can rob you of your reward, or separate you from the love

of the Son of God. The Master has given you the gift of perpetual virginity.

**Prayer**

Dear Father, source of innocence and lover of chastity, since you gave St. Maria Goretti the privilege of offering her life as evidence of the Prince, and since you gave her the laurel crown of martyrdom, please let her prayers keep us faithful to your teaching. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Nursia, Umbria about 480, Educated at Rome, he began the eremitic life at Subiaco where he gathered students, and then left for Monte Cassino, where he established the famous monastery and composed the Rule of St. Benedict. He has the title of patriarch of Western monasticism. Died on March 21, 547, but his feast has been celebrated on this day since the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

*Third Reading*

*The Rule of St. Benedict*

Whenever you begin any good action, you should first of all make a very serious plea to our Master the Prince to bring it to completion; so that the one who has honored us by including us among his children will never feel sorrow by our evil deeds. That is, we must always serve him with the good things he has given us in such a way that he will never grow impatient with our sins, in the way an angry father disinherits his sons, or even like a master who inspires fear, and condemn us to eternal punishment like disobedient slaves who would not follow him to glory.

So we should in the last analysis try to be alert, prompted by the words of Scripture, "Now is the time for us to wake from sleep." Our eyes should be open to the light God gives, and we should listen in awe to the message of God's voice as it calls, "If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts," and again, "If anyone has ears to hear, he should listen to what the Spirit is saying to the communities." And what



is the Spirit saying? “Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you how to respect the Master. Be quick while you have the light of life, so death’s darkness will not overtake you.”

And the Master again says as he is looking for the one who will do his work among the throng of people he is appealing to, “Is there any of you who wants to live his life fully? Anyone who loves long life and the enjoyment of prosperity?” And if you say, “I do” when you hear this, God tells you, “If you want true, eternal life, ‘keep your tongue from evil and your lips from deceit; turn away from evil and do good; look for peace and go after it.’ And when you have done this, my eyes will be upon you and my ears will be listening for your prayers; and even before you call my name, I will tell you, ‘Yes, I am here.’” What could be more enjoyable, my dear brothers, than the voice of our Master’s invitation to us? In his loving kindness, he reveals to us the way of life.

And so we should tie round ourselves faith and the performance of good deeds, and follow in his pathways by the guidance of the Good News; and then we will earn the right to see the one “who has called us into his Kingdom.” If we want to receive a residence in his Kingdom, we will not reach it unless we hurry there by our good deeds.

In the same way as there is such a thing as a fervor for evil, a bitter spirit, which separates us from God and leads us to hell, there is a good fervor which separates us from evil inclinations and leads us to God and to eternal life. Monks should put this fervor into practice with an overflowing love; that is, they should “outdo each other in mutual respect,” accept their weaknesses, either of body or conduct, with the utmost patience, and compete with each other in fulfilling requests. No one should go after what he considers to be good for himself; it should be what seems good for someone else. They should display brotherly love chastely, show timid respect for God in a spirit of love, and show reverence for their abbot with a genuine and submissive affection. They are to put the Prince before everything else; and may he lead us all to eternal life.

Since he wished to please God alone, Benedict left his home and patrimony to enter the religious life. He lived as a hermit in the presence of the all-seeing God.

He withdrew from the world of human beings, consciously unac-

quainted with its ways and wisely unlearned in its wisdom. He lived as a hermit in the presence of the all-seeing God.

**Prayer**

Dear God, our Father, since you made St. Benedict an outstanding guide to teach men how to live in your service, please grant us the favor of walking in the way of your commandments by preferring love of you to everything else. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Bavaria in 973. He succeeded his father in ruling over a duchy and was later named Emperor. He was most remarkable for his work in Church reform and fostering missionary activity. Died in 1024 and canonized in 1146.

*Third Reading*

*An Ancient Life of St. Henry*

After the blessed servant of God had been anointed king, he was not satisfied with the concerns of his realm; and so, to attain the crown of immortality, he decided to campaign for the King of everyone, because to serve him is to rule. In pursuit of this, he gave supreme effort to the extension of religious worship, and began to enrich the churches with property and furnish them with extensive adornments.

He reestablished the See of Bamberg in his own domain, and dedicated it to Peter and Paul, the leaders of the Emissaries, and to the martyr St. George. He submitted this by special law to the holy Church of Rome, to pay the honor due by divine right to the first see, and also to secure his foundation under Rome's patronage. But to show more clearly how carefully this holy man provided his church with the benefits of peace and calm even after his death, we are including his letter of establishment here.

“Henry, king by the preordained mercy of God, to all the children of the Church, present and future: By the extremely beneficial instruc-

tions of sacred eloquence, we are taught and advised to abandon temporal riches, to put aside earthly goods, and to exert ourselves to reach the eternal and everlasting residences of heaven. That is, present glory is ephemeral and meaningless while it is possessed, unless we can glimpse in it something of heaven's eternity. But God's mercy toward the human race provided a useful remedy when he made the reward for earthly existence a share in our heavenly country.

"Therefore, not unaware of this kindness and conscious that by the gratuitous consideration of divine mercy, we were elevated to a position of royal dignity, we think it fitting not only to enlarge the churches constructed by our ancestors, but for the greater glory of God to build new ones and raise them up as the very grateful gifts of our devotion. In addition, since we have not turned a deaf ear to our Master's commandments and obediently follow divine promptings, we wish to take the treasures of divine generosity bestowed on us by his bounty and store them in heaven, where thieves cannot dig them up or steal them and rust and moths will not destroy them. Also, when we reflect on all that we have stored up up to the present, our heart will often be drawn to him with longing and love.

"Therefore, we wish to make known to all the faithful that we have designated a portion of our paternal heritage called Babenberch to be raised to the dignity of an episcopal see, so that we ourselves and our parents will be able to be held there in glorious memory, and so that the sacrifice that rescues us will be offered constantly for all the faithful."

The Master made him rich; he protected him from his enemies and saved him from ambush. He gave him unending glory.

He guided the virtuous man along the straight path and showed him God's Kingdom. He gave him unending glory.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you filled St. Henry with your love and raised him from the cares of an earthly kingdom to eternal happiness in heaven, may his prayers in the midst of the changes in this world keep us free from sin and help us on our way to you. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.


**GL. KATERI Gekakwitha**  
 July 14  
 VIRGIN

Born in Auriesville, New York, in 1656, the daughter of a Christian Algonquin mother and a non-Christian Mohawk chief. At fourteen, she lost her parents to smallpox, and was raised in the home of an uncle, and there met Christian missionaries. In 1675, she was instructed by Jacques de Lamberville, who bathed her on Easter Sunday, April 5, 1676, when she took the name Kateri. She suffered persecution, in part because of her desire to remain a virgin, and fled to a Christian village. At Sault St. Louis, on Christmas 1677, she received first communion. On March 25, 1679, she made a private vow of virginity, and died at the age of 24 on April 17, 1680 in Caughawaga, Canada. Declared blessed by Pope John Paul II on June 22, 1980.

*Third Reading      A Sermon on the Dress of Virgins by St. Cyprian*

I now would like to address the order of virgins. Because their way of life is more elevated, our concern for them must be greater. If we were to compare the Church to a tree, they are its blossom. Virgins display the beauty of God's grace; they are the image of God that reflects the holiness of the Master; they are the most shining members of the Prince's flock. They are the glory of mother Church and reveal her fecundity; the more numerous her virgins are, the greater is her joy.

I am then speaking to these virgins and directing my advice to them, out of love rather than any sense of authority; and I do this without claiming the right to find fault with them, because I am among the last and most insignificant, and am fully aware of my unimportance; no, I do it because the more anxious and concerned I am about them, the more I am afraid of an attack from the devil. That is, it is no idle concern or empty fear that takes into consideration the path of rescue and keeps the Master's life-giving commandments.

They have dedicated themselves to the Prince, and in renouncing the pleasures of the flesh, have consecrated themselves body and soul to

God, in order to finish a task that is destined to win a great prize; they should not make efforts to adorn themselves or give pleasure to anyone but the Master, from whom they hope to receive the reward for their chastity.

Those of you who are virgins, please keep on in the way of life you have begun, and persevere in what you are to be—because you will receive a glorious prize for your virtue, a supremely excellent reward for your chastity. You have already begun now to be what we will all be in the future. You already have, here in this world, the glory of the Resurrection; you pass through the world without the world's infection, and you are equal to God's angels. Only keep your profession of virginity strong and inviolate. You began your way of life with courage; now persevere in it without faltering; search for right conduct as your adornment, not jewelry or attractive clothing.

Listen to the voice of the Emissary Paul, God's chosen receptacle, who was sent to announce the commands of heaven. Paul said, "The first man was made from dirt from the earth; the second is from heaven. Those who are made from earth are like the one who was from the earth, and those who come from heaven are like the one who comes from heaven. In the same way as we have carried the image of the man who is from the earth, we should carry the image of the man who is from heaven." This image is displayed in virginity, purity, holiness, and truth.

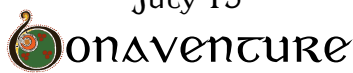
A virgin's thoughts are always upon God; her desire is to be holy both in body and soul.

The God of my heart is my share forever. Her desire is to be holy in both body and soul.

#### Prayer

Dear Master God, since you called the virgin, Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, to shine among the Indian people as an example of innocence of life, may all peoples of every tribe, tongue, and nation, once they have been assembled into your Church, proclaim through her intercession your greatness in one song of praise.

July 15


  
 Bishop, Doctor

Born about 1218 in Bagnorea, Tuscany. He studied philosophy and theology in Paris, and after earning a Master's degree, he taught his fellow Franciscans with great success. His writing did a great deal to enrich the study of both philosophy and theology. He was elected Minister General of the Order, and made Cardinal-Bishop of Albano. Died at the Council of Lyons in 1274.

*Third Reading*                      *Journey of the Mind to God by St. Bonaventure*

The Prince is both the way and the door; the Prince is the stairway and the vehicle, like the “throne of mercy of the Chest of the Treaty,” and the “mystery hidden from the ages.” A man should turn his full attention to this throne of mercy, and should gaze at him hanging on the cross, full of faith, hope, love, devotion, awe, and joy, characterized by gratitude, and open to praise and delight.

A man of this sort will make a *pasch* with the Prince; that is, a passing over. He will pass over the Red Sea through the branches of the cross, leaving Egypt and entering the desert, where he will taste the hidden manna, and rest with the Prince in the tomb, as if he were dead to things outside. He will experience, as much as is possible for a person who is still living, what was promised to the thief who hung beside the Prince: “Today you will be with me in paradise.”

For this passover to be perfect, we must suspend all the operations of our mind and must transform the peak of our emotions and direct them to God alone. This is a sacred mystical experience; it cannot be comprehended by anyone unless he surrenders himself to it; and he cannot surrender himself to it unless he longs for it; and he cannot long for it unless the Holy Spirit, whom the Prince sent into this world, comes and sets fire to his innermost soul. And that is why the Emissary says that this mystical wisdom is revealed by the Holy Spirit.

If you ask how such things can happen, look for the answer in God's grace, not in teaching; look for it in the longing of the will, not in the understanding, in sobs uttered in prayer, not research; look for the bridegroom, not the teacher, for God and not man, for darkness and not

daylight; and do not look to light but to the raging fire that carries the soul to God with intense fervor and glowing love. The first is God, and the furnace is in Jerusalem, kindled by the Prince in the heat of his loving suffering. The only one who understood this is the one who said, "My soul chose hanging, and my bones death." anyone who cherishes this kind of death can see God, because it is certainly true that "no one can look at me and live."

And so let us die and enter the darkness, silencing our worries, our emotions, and all the fantasies of our imagination. Let us pass over with the crucified Prince "from this world to the Father," so that, when the Father has shown himself to us, we can saw with Philip, "that is all we need." We will be able to hear with Paul, "My favor is enough for you," and we can celebrate with David, and say, "My body and my heart fail me, but God is my heart's strength and my inheritance forever. May the Master be forever blessed, and all the people are to say, 'Amen. Amen.'"

All those who keep God's commandments are living in God, and God is living in them. We know that he has his home in us by the Spirit he has given us.

In his Holy Spirit, God created wisdom, which he has poured out on all creation and has offered to those who love him. We know that he has his home in us by the Spirit he has given us.

Prayer

Omnipotent Father, may those of us who celebrate the feast of St. Bonaventure please benefit always from his wisdom and follow the example of his love. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Scripture celebrated the beauty of Carmel, where Elijah defended the

purity of Israel's faith; in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, hermits withdrew to that mountain and later founded the order devoted to the contemplative life under the patronage of Mary, the Holy Mother of God.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Leo the Great*

A royal virgin of the house of David is chosen; she is to bear a holy child, one who is both God and man. She is to conceive him in her soul before she conceives him in her body. In the face of so unheard-of an event, she is to know no fear through ignorance of the divine plan; the angel tells her what is to be accomplished in her by the Holy Spirit. The one who is soon to be the mother of God believes that there will be no loss of virginity. Why should she lose courage at this new form of conceiving when she has been promised that it will be brought about by the power of the Supreme Being? She believes, and her faith is confirmed by the evidence of a previous miracle: against all expectation, Elizabeth becomes fertile. God has enabled a sterile woman to be pregnant; he must be believed when he makes the same promise to a virgin.

The Son of God who was “in the beginning face to face with God, through whom everything came into being, without whom there came to be nothing that came into existence,” became man to free man from eternal death. He stooped down to take upon himself our lowliness without loss to his own glory; he remained what he was; he took on himself what he was not. He wanted to join the very nature of a slave to that nature in which he is equal to God the Father; he wanted to unite both natures in an alliance so wonderful that the glory of the greater one would not annihilate the lesser, nor the taking up of the lower one diminish the greatness of the higher.

What belongs to each nature is preserved intact and meets the other in one person; insignificance is taken up by greatness, weakness by power, and mortality by eternity. To pay the debt of our human condition, a nature incapable of suffering is united to a nature capable of suffering, and true God and true man are forged into the unity that is the Master. This was done to make possible the kind of remedy that was appropriate to our human need: “one” and the same “mediator between God and men” able to die because of one nature, able to return to life because of the other. And so it was fitting that the birth that brings rescue brought no corruption to virginal integrity; the bringing out of Truth was at the same time a safeguarding of virginity.



My dear friends, this kind of birth was appropriate to the Prince, the power and wisdom of God: a birth in which he was one with us in our human nature, but far above us in his divinity. If he were not true God, he would not be able to bring us healing; if he were not true man, he would not be able to give us an example.

And so at the birth of our Master, the angels sing in joy, “Glory to God in the heights of heaven,” and they proclaim “peace to his people on earth” as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. If the angels above are so euphoric at this marvelous work of God’s goodness, what joy should it not bring to the insignificant hearts of men?

Let us recall the memory of the glorious Virgin Mary, whose humility God favored. Once she received the angel’s message, she conceived the Savior of the world.

Let us praise the Prince as we celebrate this feast of the admirable Mother of God. Once she received the angel’s message, she conceived the Savior of the world.

**Prayer**

Dear Father, may the prayers of the Virgin Mary protect us and help us to reach her son the Prince, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

July 18  
amillus de ellis  
Priest

Born in Cheiti in the Abruzzi in 1550. He was a soldier for a while, after being refused admission into the Religious life, and on his conversion devoted himself to the care of the sick, and later became a priest and founded a society which established hospitals. Died in Rome in 1614.

*Third Reading*

*The Life of St. Camillus, by a companion*

Let me begin with holy love; it is the root of all the virtues, and was Camillus’ most characteristic trait. I can attest that he was on fire with

this holy virtue, not only toward God, but toward his fellow men too, and especially toward the sick. The mere sight of the sick was enough to melt and soften his heart, and make him completely forget all the pleasures, lures, and interests of this world. When he was taking care of his patients, he seemed to spend and exhaust himself completely, his devotion and pity was so great. He would have loved to take on himself all their illnesses, every disease they had, if he could only ease their pain and relieve their weakness.

In the sick, he saw the person of the Prince. His imagination was so vivid that as he fed them, he perceived his patients as other Princes; he would even beg them for the gift of forgiveness for his sins. His reverence in their presence was as great as if he were really and truly in the presence of his Master. In his conversations, he talked of nothing more often or with greater feeling than of holy love; he would have liked to plant this virtue in every human heart.

To kindle the enthusiasm of his religious brothers for this all-important virtue, he used to impress on them the consoling words of Prince Jesus: "I was sick and you visited me." He seemed to have these words really etched on his heart; he said them over and over again so often.

Camillus' love was great and all-embracing. It was not only the sick or dying, but every other needy or suffering human being that found shelter in his deep, kind concern. In fact, his heartfelt concern for the poor led him to say often, "If there were no poor people in the world, we would have to go under the earth to look for them and rescue them, to show pity for them and do them good."



Support the weak, and do your best to do good to everyone, because this is God's will for you in Prince Jesus.

Welcome each other as the Prince has welcomed you, for the glory of God, because this is God's will for you in Prince Jesus.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you gave St. Camillus a special love for the sick, please inspire us with your grace through his prayers, so that by serving you in our brothers and sisters, we will be able to come safely to you at the end of our lives. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God,

through all the ages of ages. Amen.

July 21  
AWRENCE OF BRINDISI  
PRIEST, DOCTOR

Born in 1559. He entered the Capuchin Friars, taught theology to his fellow religious, and filled positions of leadership in his order. He became famous throughout Europe as an effective and forceful preacher. He wrote many works explaining the faith and died in Lisbon in 1619.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Lawrence of Brindisi*

There is a spiritual life that we share with the angels in heaven and the divine spirits, because like them we have been formed in the image and likeness of God. The bread that is necessary for living this life is the grace of the Holy Spirit and the love of God; but grace and love are nothing without faith, since without faith it is impossible to please God. And faith is not conceived unless the message of God is preached; "Faith comes through hearing, and what is heard is the Prince's message." The preaching of God's message, then, is necessary for the spiritual life, just as the planting of seed is necessary for physical life.

The Prince says, "A farmer went out to plant his seeds." The planter goes out as a herald of virtue. On some occasions, we read that the herald was God; for example, when with a living voice from heaven he gave the law of virtue to a whole people in the desert.

On other occasions, the herald was an angel of the Master's, as when he accused the people of violating the divine law at Bochim, in the place of weeping. At this, all the descendants of Israel were remorseful in their hearts when they heard what the angel told them, raised their voices, and wept bitterly. Then again, Moses preached the Master's law to the whole people on the plains of Moab, as we read in Deuteronomy. Finally, the Prince came as God and man to preach the Master's message, and for the same purpose, he sent the Emissaries, just as he had sent the prophets before them.

And so preaching is a duty that is apostolic, angelic, Christian, and divine; God's message is replete with many different kinds of blessings, since it is, so to speak, a treasure of everything good. It is the source of

faith, hope, love, all the virtues, all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, all the beatitudes of the Good News, all good works, all the rewards of life, and all the glory of paradise. “Accept gladly the message that has taken root in you, with its power to save you.”

That is, God’s message is a light for the mind and a fire for the will; it enables man to know God and love him. And for an interior man, who lives by the Spirit of God through grace, it is bread and water, but a bread sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, and a water better than wine and milk. For the soul, it is a spiritual treasure of deeds to be done to earn a great deal of gold and precious stones; it acts as a hammer against the hardness of a heart that persists in wrongdoing; against the world, the flesh, and the devil, it serves as a sword that destroys all sin.

Those of you who are reporting good news to Zion, climb up to the top of a high mountain and declare to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God.”

Follow me; go and preach the Kingdom of God, and declare to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God.”

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you gave Lawrence of Brindisi courage and good judgment for the glory of your name and the rescue of souls, please help us by his prayers to know what we should do and give us the courage to do it. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## July 22 MARY MAGDALENE

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Homily on the Reports of the Good News by St. Gregory the Great*

When Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and did not find the Master’s body, she thought it had been taken away, and this was what she told the students. After she came and saw the tomb, they also believed what Mary had told them. The text then says, “The students

went back home,” and it adds, “but Mary remained standing outside the tomb, weeping.”

We should reflect on Mary’s attitude and the great love she felt for the Prince; because, though the students had left the tomb, she stayed behind. She was still looking for the one she had not found, and while she searched, she wept; since she was on fire with the fire of love, she longed for the one she thought had been taken away. And so it happened that the woman who stayed behind to look for the Prince was the only one to see him; because perseverance is essential to any good deed, as the voice of truth tells us: “Anyone who perseveres to the end will be saved.”

At first she looked and did not find anything; but when she persevered, it happened that she found what she was looking for. When our desires are not satisfied, they grow stronger, and as they become stronger, they take hold of their object. Holy desires grow in the same way with anticipation; and if they do not grow, they are not really desires. Anyone who succeeds in attaining the truth has burned with this kind of love; as David says, “My soul has been thirsty for the living God; when will I come and appear before the face of God?” And in the same way, in the Song of Songs, the Church also says, “I was wounded by love,” and again, “My soul is melting with love.”

“Madam, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?” She is asked why she is in sorrow so that her desire will be made stronger; because when she mentions the one she is looking for, her love is kindled into a greater flame.

“Jesus tells her, ‘Mary!’” Jesus is not recognized when he calls her “Madam”; so he calls her by name, as though he were saying, “Recognize me in the way I recognize you; because I do not know you as I know other people; I know you as yourself.” And so Mary, once she is addressed by name, recognizes who is speaking; and she immediately calls him, “Rabbouni,” or “Teacher!” because the one she was looking for externally was the one who taught her internally to keep searching.

Upon returning from the Master’s tomb, Mary Magdalene told the students, “I have seen the Master!” What a privilege it was for her to be the first to proclaim that the Master had really returned to life!

While she was weeping, she saw her beloved, and then ran to

announce the good news to the others. What a privilege it was for her to be the first to proclaim that the Master had really returned to life!

**Prayer**

Dear Father, since your Son first entrusted to Mary Magdalene the joyful news of his return to life, may we by her prayers and example proclaim the Prince as our living Master and one day see him in glory, because he is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

July 23  
RIDGET  
 Religious

Born in Sweden in 1303, she married and gave birth to eight children, for whom she was a devoted mother. After her husband's death, she continued to live in the world, but devoted herself to the ascetic life as a member of the Third Order of St. Francis. She then founded a religious order and in journeying to Rome as penance, she became a model of great virtue to everyone. She also wrote many works in which she related her mystical experiences. Died at Rome in 1373.

*Third Reading*

*Prayers attributed to St. Bridget*

You are blessed, my Master, Prince Jesus. You foretold your death, and at the Last Dinner you miraculously consecrated bread, which became your priceless body. And then you gave it to your Emissaries out of love as a remembrance of your supremely holy suffering. By washing their feet with your holy hands, you gave them a supreme example of your deep humility.

May honor come to you, my Master, Prince Jesus. In your fear of your suffering and death, you poured blood from your innocent body like sweat, and still you achieved our redemption as you desired and gave us the clearest proof of your love for every human being.

May you be blessed, my Master, Prince Jesus. After you had been taken to Caiaphas, you, the judge of every human being, allowed yourself to be turned over to the judgment of Pilate.

May glory come to you, my Master, Prince Jesus, for the ridicule you endured when you stood dressed in purple and wearing a crown of sharp

thorns. With ultimate endurance you allowed vicious men to spit on your glorious face, blindfold you, and beat your cheek and neck with the cruelest of blows.

May you be praised, my Master, Prince Jesus, because with the greatest patience you allowed yourself like an innocent lamb to be tied to a pillar and mercilessly whipped, and then to be brought, covered with blood, before the judgment seat of Pilate to be gazed on by everyone.

May honor come to you, my Master, Prince Jesus, because after your glorious body was covered with blood, you were condemned to death on the cross, you endured the pain of carrying the cross on your sacred shoulders, and you were taken with curses to the place where you were to suffer, and then, stripped of your clothes, you allowed yourself to be nailed to the wood of the cross.

May eternal honor be yours, Master Prince Jesus, because you allowed your supremely holy mother to suffer so much, even though she had never sinned nor even consented to the smallest sin. You looked humbly on her with your gentle, loving eyes, and to comfort her you entrusted her to the faithful care of your student.

May eternal blessings be yours, my Master, Prince Jesus, because in your last agony, you held out to all sinners the hope of pardon, when in your mercy you promised the glory of paradise to the penitent thief.

May eternal praise come to you, my Master, Prince Jesus, for the time you endured on the cross the greatest of torments and sufferings for us sinners. The sharp pain of your wounds fiercely penetrated even to your blessed soul and cruelly pierced your supremely sacred heart till finally you gave up your spirit in peace, bowed your head, humbly commended yourself into the hands of God, your Father, and your whole body remained cold in death.

May you be blessed, my Master, Prince Jesus, since you redeemed our souls with your precious blood and supremely holy death, and in your mercy you led them from exile back to eternal life.

May you be blessed, my Master, Prince Jesus, because for our rescue you allowed your side and heart to be pierced with a lance; and from that side water and your precious blood flowed out abundantly for our redemption.

May glory come to you, my Master, Prince Jesus, since you allowed your blessed body to be taken down from the cross by your friends and

laid in the arms of your greatly sorrowing mother; and you let her wrap your body in a shroud and bury it in a tomb to be guarded by soldiers.

May unending honor be yours, my Master, Prince Jesus, because on the third day you returned from the dead and appeared to those you had chosen; and after forty days, you ascended into heaven before the eyes of many witnesses, and there in heaven you gathered in glory those you love, whom you had freed from hell.

May joy and eternal praise come to you, my Master, Prince Jesus, who sent the Holy Spirit into the hearts of your students and increased the boundless love of God in their spirits.

You are blessed and praiseworthy and glorious forever, my Master Jesus. You sit upon your throne in your Kingdom of Heaven, in the glory of your divinity, living in the supremely holy body you took from a virgin's flesh; and in this way you will appear on that last day to judge the living and the dead, since you are alive and reigning with the Father and the Holy Spirit through all the ages of ages. Amen.

The Prince loved us and poured out his blood to free us from our sins; he has made us a kingdom of priests.

Live, then, in love, just as the Prince loved us and gave himself up for us; he has made us a kingdom of priests.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, our God, since you revealed the secrets of heaven to St. Bridget as she meditated on the suffering and death of your Son, may your people find their joy in the revelation of your glory. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*Third Reading*

*A Homily on Matthew by St. John Chrysostom*

The sons of Zebedee press the Prince, "Promise that one of us will sit at your right and the other at your left." What does he do? He wants



to show them that what they are asking for is not a spiritual gift, and if they knew what their request involved, they would never dare make it. So he says, "You do not know what you are asking"; that is, what a great, splendid thing it is, and how much beyond the reach even of the heavenly powers.

Then he continues, "Can you drink the cup I must drink and be bathed in the bath I must undergo?" He is saying, "You are talking of sharing honors and rewards with me, but I must talk of struggle and labor. Now is not the time for rewards or the time for my glory to be revealed. Earthly life is the time for bloodshed, war, and danger."

Consider how by his way of questioning he advises and draws them on. He does not say, "Can you face being slaughtered? Can you shed your blood?" How does he put the question? "Can you drink the cup?" Then he makes it attractive by adding "which I must drink," so that the prospect of sharing it with him will make them more eager. He also calls his suffering a Bath, to show that it will produce a great cleansing of the entire world. The students answer him, "We can!" Fervor makes them answer promptly, though they really do not know what they are saying and still think they will receive what they are asking for.

How does the Prince reply? "Yes, you will drink my cup and be bathed in my bath." He is really prophesying a great blessing for them, since he is telling them, "You will be found worthy of martyrdom; you will suffer what I suffer and end your life with a violent death, and so share everything with me. 'But thrones at my right and left side are not mine to give; they belong to those for whom the Father has prepared them.'" And so, after lifting their minds to higher goals and preparing them to meet and overcome all that will make them devastated, he sets them straight on their request.

"Then the other ten became angry at the two brothers." See how imperfect they all are; the two who tried to get ahead of the other ten, and the ten who were jealous of the two. But, as I said before, show them to me at a later date in their lives, and you will see that all these impulses have disappeared. Read how John, the very man who asks for the first place here, will always yield to Peter when it comes to preaching and performing miracles in the Acts of the Emissaries. James, for his part, was not to live very much longer; because from the beginning, he was inspired with great fervor, and, putting aside all human goals, he rose to

such splendid heights that he immediately suffered martyrdom.

These men while on earth founded the Prince's Church with their own blood; they drank the Master's cup and became the friends of God.

Their voice has gone out to the limits of the earth; what they say to the ends of the world; they drank the Master's cup and became friends of God.

#### Prayer

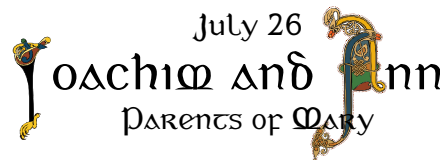
Omnipotent Father, since you blessed the work of the early Church by the martyrdom of St. James, may his profession of faith give us courage and his prayers bring us strength. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;

## July 26: JOACHIM AND ANN, PARENTS OF MARY<sup>219</sup>

and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. John Damascene*

Ann was to be the mother of the Virgin Mother of God, and hence nature did not dare to anticipate the flowering of grace; and so nature remained sterile until grace produced its fruit. That is, the one who was to be born had to be a first-born daughter, since she would be the mother of the first-born of all creation, “in whom everything is held together.”

Joachim and Ann; what an admirable couple! All creation is indebted to you, because at your hands, the Creator was offered a gift excelling every other gift: a chaste mother, who alone was worthy of him.

And so be glad, Ann, “that you were sterile and had not borne children; break into happy shouts, woman who has not given birth.” Be glad, Joachim, because from your daughter “a child is born to us, a son

is given us, whose name is Messenger of Great Guidance and Universal Rescue, Mighty God.” Because this child *is* God.

Joachim and Ann; what an admirable, spotless couple! You will be known by the yield you have produced, as the Master says, “By their fruits you will know them.” The conduct of your lives pleased God and was worthy of your daughter; because by the chaste and holy life you lived together, you have produced a jewel of virginity; the one who remained a virgin before, during, and after giving birth. She alone for all time would maintain her virginity in mind and soul as well as in body.

Joachim and Ann, how chaste a couple! While safeguarding the chastity prescribed by the law of nature, you achieved with God’s help something which transcends nature in giving the world the Virgin Mother of God as your daughter. While leading a devout and holy life in your human nature, you gave birth to a daughter nobler than the angels, whose queen she now is. Girl of utter beauty and delight, daughter of Adam and mother of God, how admirable the body and how admirable the womb from which you come! How admirable the arms that carried you, and how admirable are your parents’ lips, which you were allowed to cover with chaste kisses, always maintaining your virginity. “Find your joy in God, all the earth. Sing, leap for happiness, and chant hymns!” Raise your voice; raise it and do not be afraid.

They worshiped God day and night in fasting and prayer; they looked forward to the rescue of Israel.

They prayed that God would come to save his people; they looked forward to the rescue of Israel.

#### Prayer

Dear God of our ancestors, since you gave Sts. Joachim and Ann the privilege of being the parents of Mary the mother of your incarnate Son, may their prayers help us to attain the rescue you have promised your people. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

July 29

MARΘΑ*Third Reading**A Sermon by St. Augustine*

“It is a blessing for someone to receive the Prince in his home.” Our Master’s words teach us that though we work among many distractions from this world, we should have only one goal; because we are only travelers on a journey without a fixed home as yet; we are on our way, not yet in our native land; we are in a state of longing, not of enjoyment. But let us continue on our way, and continue without laziness or rest, so that we will ultimately arrive at our destination.

Martha and Mary were sisters, related not only by blood, but by religious aspirations; they stayed close to the Master and both served him compatibly when he was among them. Martha welcomed him in the way travelers are welcomed; but in her case, it was the servant who was host of the Master, the invalid who welcomed her Savior, the creature her Creator, to serve him physical food while she was to be fed by the Spirit; because the Master chose to put on the form of a slave, and under this form to be fed by his own slaves, out of condescension and not need. Because this really was condescension, to present himself to be fed, since he was in the flesh and would in fact be hungry and thirsty.

In this way, the Master was received as a guest who “came into his own lands and his own people did not accept him; but he gave to all those who did accept him the power to become children of God,” adopting those who were his slaves and making them his brothers, ransoming the captives and making them his coheirs. No one of you should say, “What a privilege to have received the Prince into their homes!” Do not be sorry or complain that you were born in a time when you can no longer see God in the flesh; he did not in fact take this privilege from you. As he says, “Whatever you have done to the most insignificant of my brothers, you have done to me.”

But you, Martha, if I may say so, are privileged for your good service, and for your work you are looking for the reward of peace. Now you are very busy about nourishing the body, admittedly a holy one; but when you come to the heavenly homeland, will you find a traveler to welcome, someone hungry to feed, or a thirsty person you may give something to

to drink, someone ill you could visit, or quarreling whom you could reconcile, or dead whom you could bury?

No, there will be none of these tasks there. What you will find there is what Mary chose. There we will not feed others; we will be fed ourselves; and so what Mary chose in this life will be realized there in all its fullness; she was gathering crumbs from that rich banquet, the Word of God. Do you want to know what we will have there? The Master himself tells us when he says of his slaves, "Amen I tell you he will have them lie down at the table and will pass among them serving them."

After Jesus had raised Lazarus back to life, they gave a dinner for him at Bethany, and Martha waited on the table.

Mary took a jar of costly perfume and anointed Jesus's feet; and Martha waited on the table.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since your Son honored St. Martha by coming to her home as a guest, may we by her prayers serve the Prince in our brothers and sisters and be welcomed by you into our true home, heaven. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## July 30 Peter Chrysologus Bishop

Born about 380 at Imola in Emilia, where he entered the priesthood. He was elected Bishop of Ravenna in 424 and gave learned sermons and writings. Died around 450.

#### Third Reading

#### *A Sermon by St. Peter Chrysologus*

A virgin became pregnant and bore a son, and yet remained a virgin. This is no ordinary event; it is a sign; there is no reason here, but God's power, because he is the cause, not nature. It is a special event, without anything in common with others; it is divine, not human. The Prince's birth was not necessitated; it was an expression of divine

omnipotence, a sacrament of loving kindness for the redemption of human beings. The one who made man without generation from pure clay made man again and was born from a pure body. The hand that took up clay to make our flesh deigned to take up a body for our rescue. That the Creator is in his creature and God is in the flesh brings dignity to man without dishonor to the one who made him.

Why then, man, are you so worthless in your own eyes and yet so precious to God? Why do you give yourself such disrespect when you are honored by him? Why do you ask how you were created and not try to know why you were made? Was not this entire visible universe made for your home? It was for you that the light scattered the overshadowing gloom; it was for your sake that the night was regulated and the day measured out, and for you the heavens were adorned with the different brilliances of the sun, the moon, and the stars.

The earth was decked out in flowers, woods, and fruit; and the constant, marvelous variety of lovely living things was created in the air, the fields, and the seas for you, to prevent sorrowful loneliness from destroying the joy of God's new creation. And the Creator still is working to devise things that can add to your glory; he has made you in his image so that you can in your person make the invisible Creator present on earth; he has made you his delegate so that the vast empire of the world could have the Master's representative. Then in his mercy, God took on what he made in you; he wanted now to be really revealed in man, just as he had wished to be revealed in man as in an image. Now he would be in reality what he had submitted to be in symbol.

And so the Prince is born, so that by his birth he would restore our nature; he became a child, was fed, and grew so that he would inaugurate the one perfect age to remain forever as he had created it. He supports us human beings so that we human beings will no longer fall; and he now makes heavenly the creature he had formed from earth; and what he had endowed with a human soul he now vivifies to become a heavenly spirit. In this way, he raised man completely to God, and left in him neither sin, nor death, nor labor, nor pain, nor anything earthly, with the grace of our Master Prince Jesus, who is living and reigning with the Father in unity with the Holy Spirit now and forever, through all the ages of eternity. Amen.

Come near the Prince, the living stone; you too must be living stones, built up in him.

Jesus is the stone which has become the cornerstone; you too must be living stones, built up in him.

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since you made Peter Chrysologus an outstanding preacher of your incarnate Word, may the prayers of St. Peter help us to cherish the mystery of our rescue and make its meaning clear in our love for others. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

July 31  
gnatius of Loyola  
 priest

Born in 1491 at Loyola in Cantabria. He spent his early years in court and as a soldier; but later was converted to God and studied theology at Paris, where he attracted his first followers, and afterwards at Rome he formed them into the Society of Jesus. He had a very fruitful apostolate not only by his writings but through the training of his students. Died in Rome in 1556.

*Third Reading*

*Life of St. Ignatius from his Own Words  
 by Luis Gonzalez*

Ignatius was passionately fond of reading worldly books of fiction and tales of knight-errantry. When he felt he was getting better, he asked for some books to pass the time; but no book of that sort could be found in the house, and instead they gave him a life of the Prince and a collection of the lives of the saints written in Spanish.

By constantly reading these books, he began to be attracted to what he found narrated there; sometimes in the midst of his reading, he would reflect on what he had read, yet at other times he would dwell on many of the things which he used to dwell on previously. But at this point our Master came to help him, insuring that these thoughts were followed by others which arose from his current reading.



## August 1: Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop, Doctor

While reading the life of our Master the Prince or the lives of the saints, he would reflect and reason with himself, “What if I could do what St. Francis or St. Dominic did?” In this way, he felt his mind dwell on many thoughts, which lasted for a while until other things took their place. Then those empty, worldly images would come into his mind and last a long time. This sequence of thoughts persisted with him for a great period.

But there was a difference. When Ignatius reflected on worldly thoughts, he felt intense pleasure; but when he gave them up out of weariness, he felt dry and depressed. Yet when he thought of the rigorous sort of life he knew the saints had lived, he not only experienced pleasure when he actually thought about it, but even after he dismissed these thoughts, he still experienced great joy. Yet he did not pay attention to this nor did he appreciate it until one day, in a moment of insight, he began wondering about the difference. Later on, when he began to formulate his spiritual exercises, he used this experience as an illustration to explain the theory he taught his students on the discernment of spirits.

Whoever speaks should report God’s message; whoever serves should serve by the power God gives, so that in all of you God will be glorified through Prince Jesus.

Before all else be constant in your love for each other, so that in all of you God will be glorified through Prince Jesus.

### Prayer

Dear Father, since you gave St. Ignatius of Loyola to your Church to bring greater glory to your name, may we follow his example on earth and share the crown of life in heaven We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 1  
Alphonsus Liguori  
Bishop, Doctor

Born in Naples in 1696. Though renowned as a doctor of both canon

and civil law, he left the legal profession and entered the priesthood, after which he founded the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. To foster the Christian life, he preached among the people and wrote books on moral theology, of which he is considered a master. He was made Bishop of Sant'Agata dei Goti, but resigned to work with his confreres at Nocera dei Pagani in Campagna. Died in 1787.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Alphonsus Liguori*

All holiness and perfection of soul lies in our love for Prince Jesus our God, who is our Redeemer and our supreme good. It is part of the love of God to acquire and to nurture all the virtues which make a man perfect.

Has not God in fact won a claim for himself on all our love? From all eternity he has loved us; and it is in this vein that he says to us, "Consider carefully, man, that I loved you first. You had not yet appeared in the light of day, and the world did not even exist yet, but I loved you already. I loved you from all eternity."

Since God knew that man is attracted by favors, he wanted to tie him to his love through his gifts: "I want to catch men with snares: those chains of love in which they allow themselves to be trapped, so that they will love me." And all the gifts which he bestowed on man were given for this purpose; he gave him a soul, made in his likeness, and endowed with memory, intellect, and will; he gave him a body equipped with the senses; it was for him that he created heaven and earth and such an abundance of things. He made all this out of love for man, so that all creation would serve man, and man in turn would love God out of gratitude for so many gifts.

But he did not wish to give us merely beautiful creatures; the truth is that to win our love for himself, he went so far as to bestow on us the fullness of himself. The eternal Father went so far as to give us his only Son. When he saw that we were all dead through sin and deprived of his grace, what did he do? Compelled, as the Emissary says, by the superabundance of his love for us, he sent his beloved Son to make atonement for us and to call us back to a sinless life.

By giving us his Son, whom he did not spare precisely so that he could spare us, he bestowed on us at once every good: grace, love, and heaven; because all these good things are certainly inferior to the Son. "The one who did not spare his own Son and handed him over for all of

## August 2: Eusebius of Vercelli, Bishop 227

us; how could he fail to give us everything good along with his Son?”

The Master fulfills the desires of those who hold him in respect; he listens to their cries and saves them. The Master watches over all those who love him.

Everyone who is a child of God does not sin, because God’s seed remains in him; the Master watches over all those who love him.

### Prayer

Dear Father, since you constantly build up your Church by the lives of your saints, please give us the grace to follow St. Alphonsus in his loving concern for the rescue of men and so come to share his reward in heaven. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## August 2 Eusebius of Vercelli Bishop

Born at the beginning of the fourth century in Sardinia. He became a member of the Roman clergy and in 345 was elected the first Bishop of Vercelli. He spread religion by his preaching and established a monastic life in his diocese. Because of his faith, he was exiled by Emperor Constantius and suffered a great deal. On returning to his country, he worked against the Arians for the restoration of the faith. Died in Vercelli in 371.

### Third Reading

### *A Letter by St. Eusebius of Vercelli*

My dear friends, I know now that you are safe, as I was hoping, and I felt as if I had paid you a visit by being suddenly transported over the face of the earth like Habakkuk when the angel brought him to Daniel. When I receive a letter from one of you and see in your writings your goodness and love, joy is mixed with tears, and my desire to keep reading is hampered by my weeping. Both emotions are inescapable, as they fight with each other in discharging the duty of affection, when such a letter satisfies my longing for you.

Days pass in this way as I imagine myself in conversation with you, and so I forget my past sufferings; consolations surround me everywhere: your firm faith, your love, your good deeds. Among all these great blessings I soon imagine myself among you, no longer in exile.

My dear friends, I am so happy in your faith, in the rescue that comes from faith, and in your good deeds, which are not confined to your own surroundings but spread far and wide. Like a farmer tending a healthy tree untouched by axe or fire because of its fruit, I want not only to serve you physically, since you are such a good people, but also give my life for your welfare.

Somehow or other I have managed with difficulty to complete this letter. I kept asking God to keep the guards away hour after hour, and allow the deacon to bring some kind of greeting in writing, not simply news of my suffering. So I beg you to please keep the faith with total vigilance, to preserve harmony, to be earnest in prayer, and to remember me always, so that the Master will bestow freedom on his church which is suffering throughout the world, and so that I will be set free from the sufferings that weigh on me, and so will be able to be happy with you.

I also would ask and beg you in God's mercy, to have each one of you add his own name to the greeting in this letter. Of necessity I cannot write to each of you as I used to do; so in this letter I ask you all, brothers and holy sisters, sons and daughters, men and women, old and young, to be content with this greeting and be good enough to give my respectful good wishes to those who are outside the community and are kind enough to be my friends.

Your belts should be fastened around your waists and your lamps should be burning ready; you are to be like men who are waiting for their master's return from a wedding banquet.

Stay alert, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Master will return; you are to be like men who are waiting for their master's return from a wedding banquet.

#### Prayer

Dear Master God, since St. Eusebius affirmed the divinity of your Son, may we come to share the eternal life of the Prince by keeping the faith he taught. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your

Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Lyons in 1786. After many difficulties, he was ordained a priest, and entrusted with a parish in Ars, which he cared for by preaching, mortification, prayer, and good deeds. He was famous as a confessor. Died in 1859.

*Third Reading*

*Catechetical Instructions by St. John Vianney*

My children, reflect on these words: a Christian's treasure is in heaven, not on earth. Our thoughts, then, ought to be directed to where our treasure is. This is the glorious duty of man: to pray and to love. If you pray and love, that is where a man's happiness lies.

Prayer is nothing else but union with God. When one has a heart that is pure and united with God, he is given a kind of serenity and sweetness that makes him ecstatic, a light that surrounds him with marvelous brightness. In this intimate union, God and the soul are fused together like two bits of wax that no one can ever pull apart. This union of God with a tiny creature is a lovely thing. It is a happiness beyond understanding.

We had become unqualified to pray, but God in his goodness allowed us to speak with him. Our prayer is incense that gives him the greatest pleasure.

My children, your hearts are small, but prayer stretches them and makes them capable of loving God. Through prayer we receive a foretaste of heaven and something of paradise comes down upon us. Prayer never leaves us without sweetness. It is honey that flows into the soul and makes everything sweet. When we pray properly, sorrows disappear like snow before the sun.

Prayer also makes time pass very quickly and with such great delight that one does not notice its length. Listen: Once when I was a purveyor in Brest and most of my companions were ill, I had to make a long journey. I prayed to the good God, and, believe me, the time did not seem long.

Some men immerse themselves as deeply in prayer as fish in water, because they give themselves totally to God. There is no division in their hearts. Oh how I love these noble souls! St. Francis of Assisi and St. Colette used to see our Master and talk to him just as we talk to each other.

How unlike them we are! How often we come to church with no idea of what to do or what to ask for. And yet, whenever we go to any human being, we know well enough why we are going. And still worse, there are some who seem to speak to the good God like this: "I will only say a couple of things to you and then I will be rid of you." I often think that when we come to worship the Master, we would receive everything we ask for, if we would ask with living faith and a pure heart.

Our troubles pass quickly and their burden seems light when we compare them with the weight of eternal glory which exceeds the burden of our suffering.

No eye has seen or ear heard nor has the heart of man conceived the marvels God has prepared for those who love him, which exceeds the burden of our suffering.

#### Prayer

Father of mercy, since you made St. John Vianney outstanding in his priestly zeal and concern for your people, please enable us by his example and prayers to win our brothers and sisters to the love of Christ and come with them to eternal glory. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 5  
EDICATION OF  
 ST. MARY AJOR

After the Council of Ephesus (431) in which the mother of Jesus was called the Mother of God, Pope Sixtus III erected on the Esquiline Hill at Rome a basilica dedicated to the honor of the Holy Mother of God, which was later called St. Mary Major, and is the oldest church in the

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West dedicated to Our Lady.

*Third Reading*

*A Homily delivered at the Council of Ephesus  
by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

I see here a happy group of Christian men met together in enthusiastic response to the call of Mary, the holy and ever-Virgin Mother of God. The great grief that weighed upon me is changed into joy by your presence, venerable fathers. Now the beautiful saying of the psalmist David has come true for us: "How good and pleasant it is for brothers to live together in unity."

And so, holy and incomprehensible Trinity, we salute you, at whose summons we have come together to this church of Mary, the Mother of god.

Mary, Mother of God, we salute you. Precious container, deserving of the whole world's reverence, you are an eternal light, the crown of virginity, the symbol of orthodoxy, an indestructible temple, the place that held the one no place can contain, mother, and virgin. Because of you the holy Report of the Good News could say, "Praises to the one who is coming in the Master's name."

We salute you, because in your holy womb was confined the one who is beyond all limitation. Because of you the holy Trinity is glorified and adored; the cross is called precious and is venerated throughout the world; the heavens are overjoyed; the angels and archangels are celebrating; demons are routed; the devil, that tempter, is pushed down out of heaven; the fallen race of man is elevated to the sky; all the creatures possessed by the madness of idolatry have attained knowledge of the truth; believers receive the holy Bath; the oil of gladness is poured; the Church is established throughout the world; and pagans are brought to a change of thinking.

What more is there to say? Because of you, the light of the only Son God ever fathered has shone upon those who were sitting in darkness and under the shadow of death; prophets pronounced the words of God; the Emissaries preached rescue to the Gentiles; the dead are returned to life, and kings rule by the power of the holy Trinity.

Who can put Mary's high honor into words? She is both mother and virgin. I am overwhelmed by the wonder of this miracle. Of course, no one could be prevented from living in the house he had built for himself,

yet who would invite ridicule by asking his own slave to become his mother?

Here we have, then, the joy of the whole universe. The union of God and man in the Son of the Virgin Mary should fill us with awe and admiration. We should fear and worship the undivided Trinity as we sing the praise of the ever-Virgin Mary, the holy temple of God, and of God himself, her Son and unstained bridegroom. To him may glory come through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Celebrate with me, all of you who love the Master, because in my insignificance I have pleased the Supreme Being; from my womb I have given birth to a Son who is both God and man.

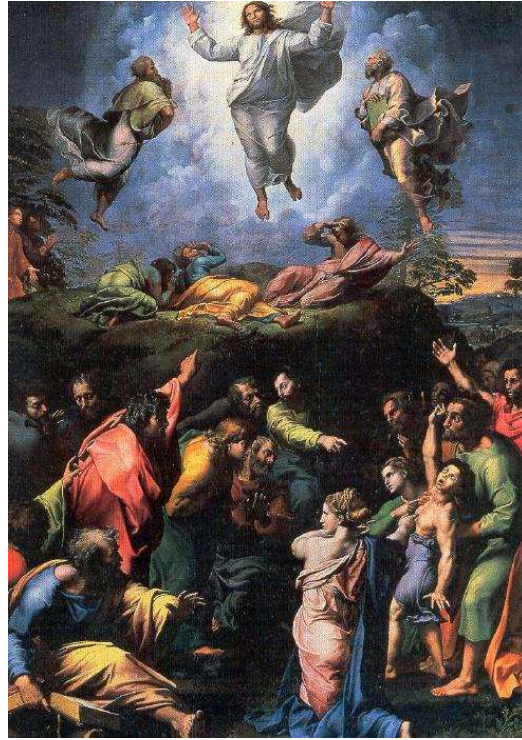
From this day every age will admire me, because the Master has looked with favor on his poor little slave; from my womb I have given birth to a Son who is both God and man.

#### Prayer

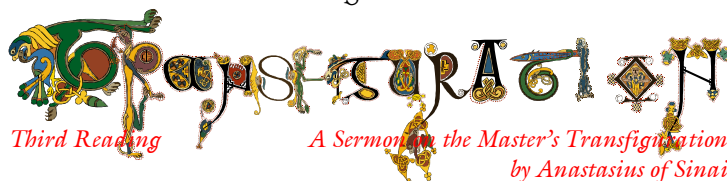
Dear Master, please pardon the sins of your people, and may the prayers of Mary, the mother of your Son, help to save us, because by ourselves we cannot please you. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



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August 6



Upon Mount Tabor, Jesus revealed to his students a heavenly mystery: While living among them, he had spoken of the Kingdom and his second coming in glory, but to drive from their hearts any possible doubt about the Kingdom and to confirm their faith in what lay in the future by its prefiguring in the present, he gave them on Mount Tabor a miraculous vision of his glory, and a foreshadowing of the Kingdom of Heaven. It was as if he told them, “As time goes on, you may be in danger of losing your faith. To save you from this, I tell you now that some ‘standing here’ listening to me ‘will not taste death until they have seen the Son of Man coming’ in the glory of his Father.” In addition, to assure us that the Prince could command such a power when he wished, the evangelist continues, “Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John, and brought them up a high mountain where they were alone. There, before their eyes, he was transfigured. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. Then the students saw Moses and Elijah appear, and they were talking to Jesus.”

These are the divine wonders we celebrate today; this is the saving revelation given us upon the mountain; this is the festival of the Prince that has drawn us here. We should, then, listen to the sacred voice of God so compellingly calling us from above, from the summit of the mountain, so that with the Master’s chosen students we will penetrate the deep meaning of these holy mysteries, so far beyond our capacity to express. Jesus goes before us to show us the way, both up the mountain and into heaven, and—I am speaking boldly—it is for us now to follow him at top speed, yearning for the heavenly vision that will give us a share in his radiance, renew our spiritual nature, and transform us into his own likeness, making us forever sharers in his divinity and raising us to heights as yet undreamed of.

Let us run with confidence and joy to enter the cloud like Moses and

Elijah, or like James and John. Let us be caught up like Peter in looking at the divine vision, and be transfigured by that glorious transfiguration. Let us retire from the world, stand apart from the earth, rise above the body, detach ourselves from creatures, and turn to the Creator, to whom Peter in ecstasy exclaimed, "Master, it is a good thing we are here!"

It is in fact good to be here, as you said, Peter. It is good to be with Jesus and remain here forever. What greater happiness or higher honor could we have than to be with God, to be made like him, and to live in his light?

And so, since each of us possesses God in his heart and is being transformed into his divine image, we should also cry out with joy, "It is a good thing we are here!" Here, where everything shines with divine radiance, where there is joy and happiness and rapture; where there is nothing in our hearts but peace, serenity, and stillness; and where God is seen. Because it is here in our hearts that the Prince makes his home together with the Father, saying as he enters, "Today rescue has come to this house." With the Prince, our hearts receive all the wealth of his eternal blessings, and in the place where they are stored for us in him we see reflected as if in a mirror both the firstfruits and the whole of the world to come.

His face shone like the sun; when the students saw his glory, they were filled with wonder and fear.

Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared before them speaking with Jesus; when the students saw his glory, they were filled with wonder and fear.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since in the transfigured glory of your Son the Prince you strengthen our faith by confirming the evidence of your prophets, and show us the splendor of the sons and daughters you love, please help us as we listen to the voice of your Son become heirs to eternal life with him, since he is living and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;

we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

August 7  
Sixtus II, Pope  
and Companions, All Martyrs

Sixtus was ordained Bishop of Rome in 257. The following year, while celebrating Mass in the cemetery of St. Callistus, he was arrested by soldiers carrying out the edict of Emperor Valerian; and on the same day, August 6, he was put to death along with four deacons, and was buried in the same cemetery.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Cyprian*

I did not write to your community immediately, my brother I love so much, because all the clergy, who are exposed to the imminent danger of being subjected to the ordeal and prepared in a spirit of dedication for the divine glory of heaven, were completely unable to leave here. But you should know that the messengers I sent to Rome have now returned. I sent them to find out the truth and report back whatever may have been decreed about us, since many conflicting and unreliable rumors are circulating.

The true situation is this: Valerian has issued an edict to the Senate to the effect that bishops, priests, and deacons are to suffer the death penalty without delay. Senators, distinguished men, and members of the equestrian class are to be deprived of their rank and property, and if, after forfeiting their wealth and privileges, they still persist in professing Christianity, they too are to be sentenced to death. Ladies of the upper classes are to be deprived of their property and exiled. In the case of members of the imperial staff, any who have either previously admitted or now admit to being Christians are to have their property confiscated and are to be assigned as prisoners to the imperial estates.

Emperor Valerian attached to this decree a copy of the letter he had sent to the provincial governors about us. Every day we are hoping that this letter will arrive, because we are standing firm in faith and ready to endure suffering, in expectation of winning the laurel crown of eternal life through the help and mercy of the Master.

I must also inform you that Sixtus was put to death in a catacomb on the sixth of August, along with four deacons; and in addition, the

prefects in Rome are zealously engaged in this prosecution without intermission, to such an extent that anyone brought before them is punished and his property claimed by the treasury.

I ask you to make these facts known to the rest of your fellow bishops, so that by the encouragement of their shepherds, the brothers and sisters everywhere will be strengthened and prepared for the spiritual combat. All of our people should fix their minds on immortality, not death; they should commit themselves to the Master in complete faith and unflinching courage, and make their profession of faith with joy rather than in fear, since they know that in this struggle, the soldiers of the Prince win their crowns and are not slaughtered.

My best regards in the Master, brother I love so much.

We are being handed over to death for Jesus's sake, so that Jesus's life will be revealed in our mortal bodies.

For your sake, Master, we are being put to death all day long and are treated like sheep to be slaughtered, so that Jesus's life will be revealed in our mortal bodies.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since by the power of the Holy Spirit you enabled St. Sixtus and his companions to give up their lives for what you said as evidence about Jesus, please give us the grace to believe in you and the courage to profess our faith. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also August 7  
 AJETAN  
 PRIEST

Born in Vicenza in 1480. He studied law in Padua and after ordination, he founded the Congregation of Clerks Regular in Rome to foster the Church's mission. He extended this congregation into Venice and Naples. He was very earnest in prayer and love of neighbor. Died in Naples in 1547.

*Third Reading**A Letter by St. Cajetan*

I am a sinner and do not think much of myself; I have recourse to the greatest servants of the Master, so that they will pray for you to the blessed Prince and his Mother. But do not forget that all the saints cannot endear you to the Prince as much as you can yourself; it is entirely up to you. If you want the Prince to love you and help you, you must love him and always make an effort to please him. Do not waver in your purpose, because even if all the saints and every single creature were to abandon you, he will always be near you, whatever your needs.

You know, of course, that we are pilgrims in this world, on a journey to our true home in heaven. A man who becomes proud loses his way and rushes down to death; while living here, we should exert ourselves to gain eternal life. Yet we cannot achieve this by ourselves, since we have lost it through sin; but Prince Jesus has recovered it for us. And this is why we must always be grateful to him and love him. We must always obey him, and as far as possible, remain united with him.

He has offered himself to be our food. What a curse for a man not to know anything of such a gift! The opportunity to receive the Prince, the son of the Virgin Mary has been given to us, and we refuse him. A person who does not care enough to receive him is doomed; my daughter, I want what is good for myself, and I beg the same for you.

Now there is no other way to bring this about than to ask the Virgin Mary constantly to come to you with her glorious Son. Be bold; ask her to give you her Son, who in the blessed sacrament of the altar is real food for your soul; and she will be glad to give him to you, and he will be still more glad to come to you and give you the strength to make your way through this dark wood without fear. In it there are a great number of our enemies waiting in ambush, but they cannot reach us if they see us relying on such powerful help.

But, my child, you must not receive Prince Jesus simply as a means for furthering your own plans; I want you to surrender to him, so that he will welcome you and, as your divine Savior, do to you and in you whatever he chooses. This is what I want; this is what I beg of you; and this, as far as I can, is what I compel you to do.

Let us praise the fame of this holy man and his boundless love; by turning aside worldly pleasures, he gained eternal life.

That is, to him, life was the Prince, and death was gain; by turning aside worldly pleasures, he gained eternal life.

Prayer

Dear Master, since you helped St. Cajetan imitate the apostolic way of life, may we by his example and prayers always trust you and be faithful in trying to find your Kingdom. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 8



DOMINIC

PRIEST

Born in Calaruega, Spain around 1170. He studied theology at Palencia and became canon of the church of Osma. He worked effectively against the Albigensian heresy through preaching and good example, and founded the Order of Preachers. Died in Bologna on August 6, 1221.

*Third Reading*      *Various Writings on the History of the Dominicans*

Dominic possessed such great integrity and was so strongly motivated by divine love that without a doubt he proved to be the bearer of honor and grace. He was a man of great equanimity, except when moved to pity and mercy. And since a joyful heart animates the face, he displayed the peaceful composure of a spiritual man by the kindness he revealed outwardly and by the cheerfulness of his expression.

Wherever he went, he showed himself in his words and actions to be a man of the Good News. During the day no one was more community-minded or pleasant toward his brothers and associates; during the night hours no one was more persistent in every kind of vigil and prayer. He seldom spoke except with God—that is, in prayer—or about God; and in this way, he taught his brothers.

He often made a special prayer that God would condescend to bestow genuine love on him, effective in caring for and gaining the rescue of human beings; because he believed that he would only really be an organ in the Prince's body when he had given himself totally for the rescue of human beings, just as Master Jesus, the Savior of everyone, had



## AUGUST 10: ST. LAWRENCE, DEACON, MARTYR 241

offered himself completely for our rescue. So, for this work, after a lengthy period of careful and judicious planning, he founded the Order of Friars Preachers.

In his conversations and letters, he often urged the brothers of the Order to study the Old and New Testaments constantly. He always carried with him the Good News as reported by Matthew and the letters of Paul, and he studied them so well that he almost knew them from memory.

Two or three times he was chosen bishop, but he always refused, because he preferred to live with his brothers in poverty. Throughout his life, he preserved the honor of his virginity. He longed to be whipped and cut to pieces and so die for the faith of the Prince. Pope Gregory IX said of him, "I knew him as a steadfast follower of the apostolic way of life; there is no doubt that he is in heaven, sharing in the glory of the Emissaries themselves."

This preacher of the new rescue leaped up like a flame; his words burned like a torch.

True teaching was in his mouth; nothing evil was ever found on his lips; his words burned like a torch.

### Prayer

Dear Master, may the holiness and teaching of St. Dominic come to the assistance of your Church; may he help us now with his prayers in the way he once inspired people by his preaching. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Lawrence, a deacon of the Church of Rome, became a martyr during the persecution of Valerian (257), four days after the martyrdom of Pope Sixtus II and his companions. His tomb is in the field of Verano near the

Via Tiburtina where Constantine later built a basilica. Devotion to him was widespread by the fourth century.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

The Roman Church commends to us today the anniversary of the triumph of St. Lawrence; because it was on this day he trampled the furious pagan world underfoot and flung aside its attractions, and so gained victory over Satan's attack on his faith.

As you have often heard, Lawrence was a deacon of the Church at Rome; and there, he served the sacred Blood of the Prince—and there, for the sake of the Prince's name, he poured out his own blood. The Emissary St. John was evidently teaching us about the mystery of the Master's dinner when he wrote, "In the same way as the Prince gave up his life for us, we ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters." My brothers and sisters, Lawrence understood this and, since he understood, he acted upon it. Just as he had had a share in a gift of self at the Master's dinner, he prepared to offer this kind of gift. In his life, he loved the Prince; in his death, he followed in his footsteps.

My brothers and sisters, we must also imitate the Prince if we really love him. We will not be able to make a better return on that love than by patterning our lives on his: "The Prince suffered for us, and left us an example, so that we would follow in his steps." In saying this, the Emissary Peter seems to have understood that the Prince suffered only for those who follow in his steps, in the sense that the Prince's suffering is no use to those who do not. The holy martyrs followed the Prince even to the shedding of their life's blood, even to reproducing an image of the suffering. They followed him—but they were not the only ones. It is not true that the bridge was broken after the martyrs crossed it, any more than it is true that the spring of eternal life dried up after they had drunk from it.

I tell you over and over again, my brothers and sisters, that it is not only the roses of the Master's martyrs that are found in his garden; there are also the lilies of virgins in it, the ivy of married couples, and the violets of widows. On no account is any class of people to despair, thinking that God has not called them; the Prince suffered for everyone. What the Scriptures say of him is true: "He wants everyone to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth."

Let us understand, then, how a Christian must follow the Prince even though he does not shed his blood for him, and his faith is not called upon to undergo the great test of the martyr's sufferings. The Emissary Paul says of our Master the Prince, "Though he was in the form of God, he did not consider equality with God something he had to keep hold of." How unparalleled is his majesty! "He emptied himself and took on the form of a slave and became just the same as a human beings; and he appeared in human form." How deep is his humility!

The Prince lowered himself. Christian, that is what you must make your

own. “The Prince became obedient.” How is it that you are proud? When this humbling experience was completed and death itself lay conquered, the Prince rose up into heaven. Let us follow him there, because we hear Paul saying, “If you have been brought back to life with the Prince, you must lift your thoughts high, where the Prince is now enthroned beside God.”

Blessed Lawrence cried, “I worship my God and serve only him, so I am not afraid of your torture.

God is my rock; I take refuge in him, so I am not afraid of your torture.”

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you called St. Lawrence to serve you by love and crowned his life with glorious martyrdom, please help us be like him in loving you and doing your work. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Assisi in 1193. She followed her fellow citizen St. Francis in a life of poverty and became mother and foundress of an order of nuns. She led a life that was austere yet rich in works of charity and piety. Died in 1253.

#### Third Reading

#### *A Letter to Bl. Agnes of Prague by St. Clare*

It is certainly a privilege for a woman to be granted a place at the divine banquet, because she can then cling with her inmost heart to the one whose beauty eternally awes the blessed armies of heaven—to the one whose love inspires love, the contemplation of whom refreshes a person, whose generosity satisfies one, whose gentleness delights a person, whose memory shines as pleasantly as the dawn; to the one whose fragrance revives the dead, and whose glorious vision will bless all the citizens of that heavenly Jerusalem; because he is the splendor of eternal glory, “the brightness of eternal light, and the mirror that has no cloud.”

Since you are queen and bride of Prince Jesus, look into that mirror

every day and study your reflection carefully, so that you will adorn yourself, mind and body, with an enveloping cloak of every virtue, and in this way find yourself dressed in flowers and gowns befitting the daughter and supremely chaste bride of the King above. In this mirror, blessed poverty, holy humility, and ineffable love are also reflected; with the grace of God, the whole mirror will be your source of contemplation.

Look, I tell you, at the birth of this mirror. Look at his poverty even as he was laid in the manger wrapped in his baby blanket. What wondrous humility, what marvelous poverty! The King of angels, the Master of heaven and earth resting in a manger! Look more deeply into the mirror and meditate on his humility, or simply on his poverty. See the many labors and sufferings he endured to redeem the human race. Then, in the depths of this very mirror, ponder the unspeakable love which caused him to suffer on the wood of the cross and to endure the most shameful kind of death. The mirror himself, from his position on the cross, warned passersby to weigh this act carefully, as he said, "All of you passing by, look and see if there is any sorrow like mine." Let us answer his cries and weeping in unison and with one spirit: "I will keep it in mind and recall it, and my soul will be eaten up inside me." In this way, queen of heaven, your love will burn with an even brighter flame.

Consider too the indescribable delights, his unending riches and honors, and sigh for what is beyond your love and heart's content as you cry, "Draw me on! We will run after you in the perfume of your ointment," heavenly spouse. Let me run and not falter until you lead me into your wine cellar; your left hand rests under my head, your right arm joyfully embraces me, and you kiss me with the sweet kiss of your lips. As you rest in this state of contemplation, remember your poor mother and know that I have indelibly written your happy memory into my heart, because you are dearer to me than all the others.

Though my body and my heart may fail, God is my strength and the share that I am served forever.

I consider all that this world offers as worthless so that I will gain the Prince and be found in him. God is my strength and the share that I am served forever.

Prayer

God of mercy, since you inspired St. Clare with the love of poverty, may we by the help of her prayers follow the Prince in poverty of spirit and come to the joyful vision of your glory in the Kingdom of Heaven. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 13  
Pontian, Pope, and  
Hippolytus, Priest  
Martyrs

St. Pontian was ordained pope in 231. In 235, he was banished to Sardinia by the Emperor Maximinus, along with the priest Hippolytus; there he resigned from his office and later died. His body was buried in the cemetery of St. Callistus, while the body of Hippolytus was buried by the Via Tiburtina. The Roman Church sanctioned devotion to both martyrs at the beginning of the fourth century.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Cyprian*

What praises can I honor you with, my supremely courageous brothers? What words can I find to proclaim and celebrate your brave hearts and your persevering faith? Even though you were examined under the severest of tortures, you held out until your ordeal culminated in glory; it was not you who yielded to the torment, but the torment yielded to you. No respite from pain was allowed by the instruments of torture, but your very crowning signaled the end of pain. The cruel butchery was permitted to last even longer, not so that it would overcome the faith that stood so firm, but really so that it would dispatch you, since you were men of God, more quickly to the Master.

The crowd watched God's heavenly conquest in awe, this spiritual battle that was the Prince's. They saw his slaves standing firm, free in speech, undefiled in heart, endowed with supernatural courage, naked and bereft of the weapons of this world, but equipped as believers with

the armament of faith. Tortured men stood there stronger than their torturers; battered and lacerated limbs triumphed over clubs and claws that tore at them.

Savage and prolonged beating could not conquer such invincible faith, even when the bodies of God's slaves were so mangled that no parts were left intact to suffer punishment; only wounds remained. Enough blood flowed to quench the fire of persecution, a glorious river to cool even the burning heat of hell. What a divine display it was; how sublime and magnificent! How pleasing did the sworn allegiance and loyalty of his soldiers make the dead in God's sight! In the psalms, where the Holy Spirit speaks to us and gives us advice, it is written, "The death of his holy ones is precious in his sight." And that death is called "precious" appropriately, because at the price of blood it bought immortality and won God's crown through the ultimate act of courage.

How happy the Prince was to be there; how gladly he fought and won in slaves like this! He protects their faith and gives strength to believers in proportion to the trust that each person who receives that strength is willing to place in him. The Prince was there to wage his own battle; he rallied the soldiers who fought in his name; he made them energetic and strong. And the one who once and for all conquered death for us now constantly conquers opponents in us.

This Church of ours has been so blessed, so honored and illuminated by God and ennobled in our own days by the glorious blood of martyrs! In earlier times, it shone white with the good deeds of our brothers and sisters, and now it is adorned with the red blood of martyrs. It includes both lilies and roses in its garlands. So each of us should make the greatest effort for the highest degree of glory, whichever the honor a person is destined for; and may every Christian be found deserving of either the pure white crown of a holy life or the royal red crown of martyrdom.

We are warriors now, fighting on the battlefield of faith, and God sees everything we do; the angels are watching and so is the Prince. It is such a great honor and glory and joy to do battle in the presence of God and to have the Prince approve our victory.

We should equip ourselves with all our armaments and prepare ourselves for the ultimate struggle with blameless hearts, true faith, and

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PRIEST, MARTYR

unyielding courage. It is such a great honor and glory and joy to do battle in the presence of God and to have the Prince approve our victory.

*Prayer*

Dear Master, may the loyal suffering of your saints Pontian and Hippolytus fill us with your love and make our hearts steadfast in faith. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 14  
 MAXIMILIAN  MARY  Kolbe  
PRIEST, MARTYR

Born January 8, 1894 in Poland, became a conventual Franciscan and in 1918 was ordained in Rome. He established the sodality called the Militia of Mary Immaculate and promoted its growth in Poland and elsewhere. As missionary in Japan he spread Christianity under the patronage of the Immaculate Virgin. He returned to Poland and during WW II, was imprisoned and suffered great hardship in Oswiecim (Auschwitz). On August 14, 1941, he offered his own life for another prisoner.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by Maximilian Mary Kolbe*

The burning zeal for God's glory that motivates you fills my heart with joy. It is sad for us to see in our own time that indifferentism is spreading like an epidemic, not only among the laity but even among religious. But God deserves glory beyond measure, and therefore, it is of absolute and supreme importance to try to give that glory with all the power of our feeble resources. Since we are mere creatures, we can never return to him everything that is his due.

The most resplendent manifestation of God's glory is the rescue of souls whom the Prince redeemed by shedding his blood. To work for the rescue and sanctification of as many souls as possible, therefore, is the preeminent purpose of the apostolic life. Let me, then, say a few words that may show the way toward achieving God's glory and the sanctifica-

tion of many souls.

God, who is omniscient and all-wise, knows best what we should do to increase his glory. Through his representatives on earth, he continually reveals his will to us; and so it is obedience and obedience alone that is the sure sign to us of his divine will. A superior may, it is true, make a mistake; but it is impossible for us to be mistaken in obeying a superior's command. The only exception to this rule is the case of a superior commanding something that in even the slightest way would contravene God's law. Such a superior would not be conveying God's will.

God alone is infinitely wise, holy, merciful, our Master, Creator, and Father; he is the beginning and end, wisdom and power and love; he is everything. Everything other than God has value to the degree that it is referred to him, the maker of everything and our own redeemer, the final end of everything. It is he who, in declaring his adorable will to us through his representatives on earth, draws us to himself and whose plan is to draw others to himself through us and to join us all to himself in an ever-deepening love.

Look, then, at the high dignity that by God's mercy belongs to our state in life. Obedience raises us beyond the limits of our littleness and puts us in harmony with God's will. In boundless wisdom and care, his will guides us to act correctly. In holding fast to that will, which no creature can thwart, we are filled with unsurpassable strength.

Obedience is the one and the only way of wisdom and prudence for us to offer glory to God. If there were another, the Prince would certainly have shown it to us by word and example. Scripture, however, summed up his entire life at Nazareth in the words, "He was subject to them"; Scripture set obedience as the theme of the rest of his life, repeatedly declaring that he came into the world to do his Father's will.

Let us love our loving Father with all our hearts. Let our obedience increase that love, above all when it requires us to surrender our own will. Prince Jesus crucified is our sublime guide toward growth in God's love.

We will learn this lesson more quickly through the Immaculate Virgin, whom God has made the dispenser of his mercy. It is beyond all doubt that Mary's will represents to us the will of God himself. By dedicating ourselves to her, we become in her hands the instruments of God's mercy even as she was such an instrument in God's hands. We



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should let ourselves be guided and led by Mary and rest quiet and secure in her hands. She will watch out for us, provide for us, and answer our needs of body and spirit; she will dissolve all our difficulties and worries.

Be imitators of God as his dear children; follow the way of love, just as the Prince loved us and gave himself up for us as an offering to God, a gift of pleasing fragrance.

Do God's will with your whole heart as slaves of the Prince, a gift of pleasing fragrance.

**Prayer**

Gracious God, since you filled your priest and martyr St. Maximilian Kolbe with zeal for your house and love of his neighbor, please grant through the prayers of this devoted slave of Mary Immaculate that in our efforts to serve others for your glory, we too will become like your Son the Prince, who loved those who were his own in the world to the end, and is now alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



August 15



*Third Reading      The Apostolic Constitution Munificentissimus Deus  
by Pope Pius XII*

In their homilies and sermons on this feast, the holy fathers and great doctors spoke of the assumption of the Mother of God as something already familiar and accepted by the faithful. They gave it greater clarity in their preaching and used more profound arguments in setting out its nature and meaning. Above all, they brought out more clearly the fact that what is commemorated in this feast is not simply the total absence of corruption from the dead body of the Blessed Virgin Mary but also her triumph over death and her glorification in heaven, after the pattern set by her only Son, Prince Jesus.

Thus, St. John Damascene, preeminent as the great preacher of this truth of tradition, speaks with powerful eloquence when he relates the bodily assumption of the loving Mother of God to her other gifts and privileges: "It was necessary for the one who had preserved her virginity inviolate in childbirth also to have her body kept free from all corruption after death. It was necessary for the one who had carried the Creator as a child on her breast to live in God's tents. It was necessary for the bride married by the Father to make her home in the bridal chambers of heaven. It was necessary for the one who gazed on the crucified Son and had been pierced in the heart by the sword of sorrow which she had escaped in giving him birth to contemplate him seated with the Father. It was necessary for the Mother of God to share the possessions of her Son, and be revered by every creature as the Mother and handmaid of God."

St. Germanus of Constantinople considered that it was in keeping not only with her divine motherhood but with the unique sanctity of her

virginal body that it be incorrupt and carried up to heaven: “In the words of Scripture, you appear ‘in beauty.’ Your virginal body is entirely holy, entirely chaste, entirely the house of God, so that for this reason it is also henceforth a stranger to decay: a body changed, because a human body, to a preeminent life of incorruptibility, but still a living body, excelling splendor, a body inviolate and sharing in the perfection of life.”

Another early author declares: “Therefore, as the supremely glorious Mother of the Prince, our God and Savior, giver of life and immortality, she is given life by him to share an eternal incorruptibility of body with the one who raised her from the tomb and took her up to himself in a way he alone can tell.”

All these reasonings and considerations of the holy Fathers rest on Scripture as their ultimate foundation. Scripture portrays the loving Mother of God, almost before our eyes, as most intimately united with her divine Son and always sharing in his destiny.

Above all, it must be noted that from the second century, the holy Fathers present the Virgin Mary as the new Eve, most closely associated with the new Adam; though subject to him in the struggle against the enemy from the world below. This struggle, as the first promise of a redeemer implies, was to end in perfect victory over sin and death always linked together in the writings of the Emissary to the Gentiles. Therefore, just as the glorious return to life of the Prince was an essential part of the victory and its final trophy, so the struggle shared by the Blessed Virgin and her Son was to end in the glorification of her virginal body. As the same Emissary says: “When this mortal body has dressed itself in immortality, then the statement of Scripture will be fulfilled: ‘Death has been swallowed in victory.’”

Hence, the August Mother of God, mysteriously united from all eternity with Prince Jesus in one and the same decree of predestination, immaculate in her conception, a virgin inviolate in her divine motherhood, the whole-hearted companion of the divine Redeemer who won complete victory over sin and its consequences, gained at last the supreme crown of her privileges—to be preserved immune from the corruption of the tomb, and, like her Son, when death had been conquered, to be carried up body and soul to the exalted glory of heaven, there to sit in splendor at the right hand of her Son, the immortal King of the ages.

This is the glorious day on which the Virgin Mother of God was taken up to heaven; let us sing these words in her praise: You are the most remarkable woman in the world, and the child of your womb is astounding.

You have been blessed, holy Virgin Mary, and deserve all our praise; from your womb the Prince, the Sun of Virtue, has been taken. You are the most remarkable woman in the world, and the child of your womb is astounding.

#### Prayer

Omnipotent and eternally living God, since you raised the sinless Virgin Mary, mother of your Son, body and soul to the glory of heaven, may we please see heaven as our final goal and come to share her glory. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaims you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.

And as you undertook to set man free,  
 you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
 and when you overcame the sting of death,  
 you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
 and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
 And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
 And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
 whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
 Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
 Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
 And be their King and support from now for ever.  
 We sing your praises each and every day,  
 and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
 Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
 to keep us free of sin.  
 Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
 since we have put our trust in you.  
 I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
 never let my hopes be shattered.



Born ca. 969 in Pannonia, and crowned King of Hungary in 1000. He was just, peaceful, and pious, and founded many dioceses and in other ways fostered the work of the Church. Died in Szekesfehervar in 1038.

*Third Reading*

*An Admonition to his Son by St. Stephen*

My very dear son, if you want to honor the royal crown, I would advise, counsel, and urge you above everything to maintain the Catholic and Apostolic faith with such effort and care that you will be an example for all the people placed under you by God, and that all the clergy will correctly call you a man of true Christian profession. If you fail to do this, you may be sure that you will not be called a Christian or a son of the Church. In fact, in the royal palace, the Church holds second place

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after the faith itself, since it was first planted by our head, the Prince, and then transplanted, firmly established, and spread through the whole world by his members, the Emissaries and the holy fathers. And though it has always produced fresh offspring, still in certain places it is regarded as ancient.

Nevertheless, my very dear son, even now in our kingdom the Church is spoken of as young and newly planted; and for that reason, it needs more prudent and trustworthy guardians to prevent a benefit which the divine mercy bestowed on us from being destroyed and annihilated through your idleness, laziness, or neglect.

My beloved son, the delight of my heart, the hope of your posterity, I pray—I command—that at every time and in everything, strengthened by your devotion to me, you will show favor not only to relations and kin, or to the most prominent people, whether they are leaders or rich men or neighbors or fellow-countrymen, but also to foreigners and everyone who comes to you. By fulfilling your duty in this way, you will reach the highest state of happiness. Be merciful to everyone who is suffering violence, and keep always in your heart the example of the Master, who said, “I want mercy and not sacrifices.” Be patient with everyone, not simply with the powerful, but with the weak too.

Finally, be strong, to keep prosperity from raising you up too high, or adversity from dashing you down. Be humble in this life, so that God will elevate you in the next. Be really self-controlled and do not punish or condemn anyone immoderately. Be gentle, so that you will never oppose justice. Be honorable, so that you will never voluntarily bring disgrace on anyone. Be chaste, so that you will avoid all the foulness of lust like the pangs of death.

All of the virtues I mentioned above make up the royal crown; and without them no one is fit to rule here on earth or to attain the heavenly kingdom.

Give to charity in accordance with your means; if you have many possessions, give generously; if you have few, give some of what you have.

And when you give, give with a cheerful face; give to the Supreme Being in the same way as he has given to you. If you have many possessions, give generously; if you have few, give some of what you

have.

**Prayer**

Omnipotent Father, please bestow on us the favor of having St. Stephen of Hungary, who fostered the growth of the Church on earth, continue to be our powerful helper in heaven. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Dijon, France, in 1572. She married the nobleman Chantal and had 6 sons, to whom she taught the Christian faith. When her husband died, she joined the religious life under St. Francis de Sales and performed works of charity for the poor and sick. She founded the Visitation order, which she directed until her death in 1641.

*Third Reading*

*Memoirs of the Secretary  
of St. Jane Frances de Chantal*

One day, St. Jane gave the following eloquent address, which listeners took down verbatim.

“My dear daughters, many of our holy fathers in the faith, who were pillars of the Church, did not die martyrs. Why do you think this was?” Each one present offered an answer; then their mother continued, “Well, I think myself that it was because there is another martyrdom: the martyrdom of love. Here, God keeps his servants and handmaids in the present life so that they will work for him, and he makes both martyrs and confessors of them. I know,” she added, “that the daughters of the Visitation are meant to be martyrs of this kind, and that, by the favor of God, some of them, luckier than others in that their desire has been granted, will actually suffer this kind of martyrdom.”

One sister asked what form this martyrdom took, and the Saint answered, “Yield yourself completely to God, and you will find out.



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Divine love takes its sword to the hidden crannies of our inmost soul and divides us from ourselves. I know one person whom love cut off from all that was dearest to her, just as completely and effectively as if a tyrant's sword had severed spirit from body."

We realized that she was speaking of herself. When another sister asked how long the martyrdom would last, the Saint replied, "From the moment when we commit ourselves unreservedly to God until our last breath. I am speaking, of course, of great-souled individuals, who keep nothing back for themselves, and instead are faithful in love. Our Master does not intend this martyrdom for those who are weak in love and perseverance; he lets those people continue on their mediocre way, so that they will not be lost to him; he never does violence to our free will."

Finally, the Saint was asked whether this martyrdom of love could be put on the same level as martyrdom of the body, and she answered, "We should not worry about equality. I do think, however, that the martyrdom of love cannot be relegated to a second place, because "love is as strong as death." That is, the martyrs of love suffer infinitely more in remaining in this life to serve God than if they died a thousand times over in witness to the faith and love and fidelity."

There are many things that are true, honorable, and virtuous; many that are pure, deserving of love and praise. You should do these, and the God of peace will be with you.

If there is anything virtuous anything admirable, think of this above everything else, and the God of peace will be with you.

### Prayer

Dear Master, since you chose St. Jane Frances to serve you both in marriage and in religious life, please help us by her prayers to be faithful in our vocation and always to be the light of the world. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 19  
 ohn Eudes  
 Priest

Born in the diocese of Séez in France in 1601. After ordination, he spent several years giving missions, and then founded congregations devoted to improving priestly formation, and encouraging women at risk to lead Christian lives. He fostered great devotion to the hearts of Jesus and Mary. Died in 1680.

*Third Reading*

*A Treatise on the Admirable Heart of Jesus  
 by St. John Eudes*

I ask you to consider that our Master Prince Jesus is your true head, and that you are a cell in his body. He belongs to you in the way in which the head belongs to the body; all that is his is yours: breath, heart, body, soul, and all his faculties. You must use all of these as if they belonged to you, so that in serving him you will give him praise, love, and glory. You belong to him in the way in which a part of the body belongs to the head; and this is why he earnestly desires you to serve and glorify the Father by using all your faculties as if they were his.

He belongs to you; but more than that, he longs to be in you, to be living and ruling in you, in the way in which the head lives and rules in the body. He desires that whatever is in him will live and rule in you; his breath in your breath, his heart in your heart, all the faculties of his soul in the faculties of your soul, so that these words will find their fulfillment in you: “Glorify God and carry him in your body, so that the life of Jesus will shine out of you.”

You belong to the Son of God; but more than that, you should be in him in the way parts of the body are in the head. All that is in you must be incorporated into him; you must receive life from him and be ruled by him. There will be no true life for you except in him, because he is the only source of true life. Apart from him, you will find only death and ruin. Let him be the only source of your movements, of the actions and strength of your life. He must be the source and purpose of your life, so that you will fulfill these words: “None of us lives as his own master, and none of us dies as his own master; while we live, we are responsible to the Master, and when we die, we die as his slaves. Both in life and in death, we are the Master’s; that is why the Prince died and came to life

again, so that he would be Master of both the dead and the living.”

Finally, you are to be one thing with Jesus in the way in which the body is one thing with the head. You must, then, have one breath with him, one soul, one life, one will, one mind, and one heart. And he must be your breath, heart, love, life, and your all. These great gifts in a follower of the Prince originate from the Bath; they are increased and strengthened through confirmation and by making good use of other graces that are given by God. Through the holy Eucharist, they are brought to completion.

The Prince died and came back to life so that he would be the Master of the living and the dead; whether we live or die, we belong to the Master.

None of us lives for himself, and none of us dies for himself alone; whether we live or die, we belong to the Master.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you chose the priest John Eudes to preach the infinite riches of the Prince, please help us know you better by his teaching and example, and live faithfully in the light of the Good News. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born 1090 near Dijon in France; he joined the Cistercians in 1111 and was chosen abbot of the monastery of Clairvaux, where he directed his companions in virtue by his own good example. Because of schisms which had arisen, he traveled through Europe restoring peace and unity. He wrote many theological and spiritual works. Died in 1153

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Sermon by St. Bernard*

Love is self-sufficient; it gives pleasure by itself and because of itself. It is its own meritoriousness, its own reward. Love looks for no cause outside itself, and no effect beyond itself; its benefit consists in its

practice. Love is a great thing, as long as it constantly returns to its source and flows back to its origins, and keeps drawing from it water which constantly replenishes it.

Of all the movements, sensations, and feelings of the soul, love is the only one in which a creature can respond to the Creator and make some sort of similar return, even if it is vastly unequal. That is, when God loves, all he wants is to be loved in return; the sole purpose of his love is to be loved, in the knowledge that those who love him become happy by their love for him. The Bridegroom's love—or rather, the love which is the Bridegroom—asks nothing in return but faithful love. And so the beloved person should love in return; should not a bride love, especially Love's bride? Could it be that Love is not loved?

And so it is proper for her to give up all other feelings and devote herself completely to love alone; in giving love back, all she can do is respond to love. And when she has poured her whole being out in love, what is that in comparison with the unceasing torrent of that original source? Clearly, lover and Love, soul and Word, bride and Bridegroom, creature and Creator do not flow with the same volume; one might as well equate a thirsty man with a fountain.

Then what about the bride's hope, her aching desire, her passionate love, and her confident assurance? Is all this to wilt just because she cannot match stride for stride with her giant, any more than she can compete with honey for sweetness, rival a lamb for gentleness, show herself as white as a lily, burn as bright as the sun, or be equal in love with the one who is Love? No. It is true that a creature loves less because she is less; but if she loves with her whole being, there is nothing missing where everything is given. To love so fervently, then, is to share the marriage bond; she cannot love that much and not be totally loved; and it is in the perfect union of two hearts that complete and perfect marriage consists. Or are we to doubt that the soul is loved by the Word first, and with a greater love?

Master, how great are the hidden treasures of your goodness which you have in store for those who respect you.

They are filled with the plenty of your house; and you give them drink from the river of your pleasures which you have in store for those who respect you.

## Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, since St. Bernard was filled with zeal for your house and was a radiant light in your Church, may we by his prayers be filled with his spirit of zeal and always behave like children of light. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## August 21



Born in 1835 in Riese, Venice. Became bishop of Mantua and patriarch of Venice, and was elected pope in 1903, taking as his motto “renew everything in the Prince.” He fulfilled this task in the spirit of simplicity, poverty, and courage, waging war against the errors of his age. Died August 20, 1914.

*Third Reading**Apostolic Constitution Divino Afflatu  
by St. Pius X*

The collection of psalms found in Scripture, composed as it was under divine inspiration, has, from the very beginnings of the Church, shown a wonderful power to foster devotion among Christians as they offer “to God a continuous sacrifice of praise, the harvest of lips blessing his name.” Following a custom already established in the Old Law, the psalms have played a conspicuous part in the sacred liturgy itself, and in the divine office.

Thus was born what Basil calls “the voice of the Church,” that singing of psalms which is “the daughter of that hymn of praise (to use the words of our predecessor Urban VIII) which goes up unceasingly before the throne of God and the Lamb” and which teaches those especially charged with the duty of divine worship, as Athanasius says, “the way to praise God and the fitting words in which to bless him.” Augustine expresses this well when he says, “God praised himself so that men could give him fitting praise; because God chose to praise himself, man found the way in which to bless God.”

The psalms also have a wonderful power to awaken in our hearts the

desire for every virtue. Athanasius says, "Though all Scripture, both old and new, is divinely inspired and has its use in teaching, as we read in Scripture itself, still, the Book of Psalms, like a garden enclosing" the fruits of "all the other" books, "produces their fruit in song, and in the process of singing brings out its own special fruit to take their place beside them." In the same place, Athanasius correctly adds, "The psalms seem to me to be like a mirror, in which the person using them can see himself, and the stirrings of his own heart; he can recite them against the background of his own emotions." Augustine says in his *Confessions*, "I wept so profusely when I heard your hymns and songs, since I was deeply moved by the sweet singing of your Church. Those voices flowed into my ears, truth filtered into my heart, and from my heart surged waves of devotion. Tears ran down, and I was happy in my tears."

Could anyone, in fact, fail to be moved by all those passages in the psalms which set out so profoundly the infinite majesty of God, his omnipotence, his virtue and goodness and kindness, too deep for words, and all the other infinite qualities of his that deserve our praise? Could anyone fail to be roused to the same emotions by the prayers of gratitude to God for blessings received, by the petitions, so humble and confident, for blessings still awaited, or by the cries of a soul in sorrow for sin committed? Could anyone not be fired with love as he looks on the image of the Prince, the redeemer, so lovingly foretold here? It was his "voice" Augustine "heard in every psalm, the voice of praise, suffering, joyful expectation, and present distress."

God has found us to be fit to be slaves of his Good News, and so when we speak, our efforts are to please God and not men.

Our preaching does not spring from error or impure motives or a desire to deceive; our efforts are to please God and not men.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since to defend the Catholic faith and make everything new in the Prince you filled St. Pius X with heavenly wisdom and apostolic courage, may his example and teaching please lead us to the reward of eternal life. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 22  
ueenship of ARY

*Third Reading*

*A Homily by St. Amadeus of Lausanne*

Notice how appropriate it was that even before her assumption, the name of Mary shone wondrously throughout the world. Her fame spread everywhere even before she was raised above the heavens in her magnificence. Because of the honor due her Son, it was actually fitting for the Virgin Mother to have first ruled on earth and then be raised up to heaven in glory. It was fitting that her fame be spread in this world below, so that she would enter the heights of heaven in overwhelming admiration. Just as she was borne from virtue to virtue by the Spirit of the Master, she was transported from earthly renown to heavenly brightness.

So it was that she began to taste the fruit of her future reign while she was still in the flesh. At one moment, she withdrew to God in ecstasy; at the next, she would bend down to her neighbors with indescribable love. In heaven, angels served her, while here on earth she was given reverence by the service of men. Gabriel and the angels waited upon her in heaven; the virgin John, in his happiness that the Virgin Mother was entrusted to him at the cross, cared for her with the other Emissaries here below. The angels were glad to see their queen; the Emissaries were happy to see their mistress, and both obeyed her with loving devotion.

Since she lived in the highest citadel of virtue, like a sea of grace or an unfathomable spring of love that has overflowed its banks everywhere, she poured her copious water on trusting and thirsty souls. And since she was able to preserve both flesh and spirit from death, she bestowed health-giving salve on bodies and souls. Has anyone ever come away from her troubled or saddened or ignorant of the heavenly mysteries? Who has not returned to everyday life gladdened and happy because his request had been granted by the Mother of God?

She is a bride who is so gentle and affectionate, and the mother of the only true bridegroom. In her abundant goodness, she has channeled

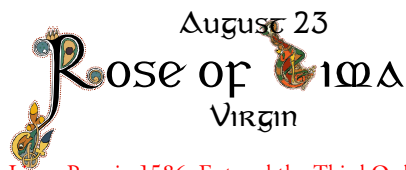
the spring of reason's garden, the well of living and life-giving water that pours out in a rushing stream from divine Lebanon and flows down from Mount Zion until it surrounds the shores of every far-flung nation. With divine assistance, she has redirected this water and made it into streams of peace and pools of grace. Therefore, when the Virgin of virgins was led out by God and her Son, the King of kings, in the company of exultant angels and jubilant archangels, as the heavens rang with praise, the prophesy of the psalmist was fulfilled, where he said to the Master, "The queen, dressed in gold from Ophir, is standing by your side."

A great sign appeared in the sky: a woman, dressed in the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head.

The queen, dressed in cloth of gold stood by your side, and a crown of twelve stars was on her head.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you have given us the mother of your Son to be our queen and mother, may we please with the support of her prayers come to share the glory of your children in the Kingdom of Heaven. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Lima, Peru in 1586. Entered the Third Order of St. Dominic, and made great progress in a life of penance and contemplation. Died August 24, 1617.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *Writings of St. Rose of Lima*

Our Master and Savior raised his voice and said with incomparable majesty, "Every human being is to know that grace comes after trouble; they are to know that without the burden of hardship, it is impossible to



reach the height of grace. They should know that the gifts of grace increase as the struggles increase; they should take care not to stray and be deceived. This is the only true stairway to paradise, and without the cross they can find no road to climb to heaven”

When I heard these words, a strong force came upon me and seemed to place me in the middle of a street, so that I could say in a loud voice to people of every age, sex, and status, “Listen, my people; listen nations! I am warning you about the commandment of the Prince by using words that came from his own lips: We cannot obtain grace unless we suffer hardships. We must heap trouble upon trouble to attain a deep participation in the divine nature, the glory of the sons of God, and perfect happiness of soul.”

That same force strongly urged me to announce the beauty of divine grace; it pressed me so that my breath came slowly and forced me to sweat and pant. I felt as if my soul could no longer be kept in the prison of the body, and that it had burst its chains and was free and alone and was going swiftly through the whole world saying, “If only mortals would learn how great it is to possess divine grace, how beautiful, noble, and valuable. It hides so many riches within itself, so many joys and delights! Without doubt they would devote all their care and concern to winning pains and troubles for themselves. Every human being throughout the world would search out trouble, weakness, and torments, instead of prosperity, in order to gain the unfathomable treasure of grace. This is the reward and the final gain of patience. No one would complain about the cross or troubles that might happen to him if he were to come to know the scales on which they are weighed when they are parceled out to human beings.”

God chose what the world considers stupid to shame the wise; God chose nobodies to humble the somebodies, so that no one could take pride in himself in his presence.

Though the Master lives high above, he cares for the little people; but he looks down on the proud from a distance, so that no one could take pride in himself in his presence.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since St. Rose gave up everything for love of you

to devote herself to a life of penance, may we please by the help of her prayers imitate her selfless way of life on earth. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 24  
 ARTHOLOMEW  
 EMISSARY

*Third Reading      A Homily on 1 Corinthians by St. John Chrysostom*

It was clear through uneducated men that the cross was persuasive; in fact, it persuaded the whole world. Their speech was not about trivial things; it was about God and true religion, about the Good News way of life and future judgment, yet it turned plain, uneducated men into philosophers. How much wiser is the stupidity of God than men's wisdom, and how much stronger is his weakness than men's strength!

In what way was it stronger? It made its way throughout the world, and conquered everyone; countless men tried to erase the very name of the Crucified Man, but that name flourished and grew still mightier. Its enemies lost out and died; the living people who made war on a dead man proved helpless. And so, when a Greek tells me I am dead, he only shows that he is really stupid, because the one he thinks is a fool turns out to be wiser than those with a reputation for wisdom. And in the same way, in calling me weak, he only shows that he is still weaker; because the good deeds that tax-collectors and fishermen were able to achieve by God's grace the rulers and countless throngs cannot even imagine.

Paul had this in mind when he said, "God's weakness is stronger than men." That the preaching of these men was in fact divine is brought home to us in the same way; because how otherwise could twelve uneducated men, who lived on lakes and rivers and deserts, get the idea for such an immense enterprise? How could men who perhaps had never been in a city or a public square think of setting out to do battle with the whole world? The evangelist makes clear that they were fearful, timid men; he did not reject the fact or try to hide their weaknesses; in fact, he

turned these into a proof of the truth. What did he say about them? That when the Prince was arrested, the others ran away, despite all the miracles they had seen, while the one who was the leader of the others repudiated him!

How then are we to account for the fact that these men, who in the Prince's lifetime did not stand up to the attacks by the Judeans, set out to do battle with the whole world once the Prince was dead—if, as you claim, the Prince did not return to life and speak to them and rouse their courage? Did they perhaps say to themselves, "What is this? He could not save himself, but he will protect us? He did not help himself when he was alive, but now that he is dead he will extend a helping hand to us? In his lifetime, he brought no nation under his banner, but by uttering his name, we will win over the whole world? Would it not be completely irrational to think thoughts like these, much less to act upon them?

It is evident, then, that if they had not seen him returned to life and had proof of his power, they would not have risked so much.

Our proclamation deals with the Prince crucified, which is shocking to the Judeans and ridiculous to the Gentiles; but to those who have heard his call, the Prince is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

We are tormented in every way possible; but in all of these troubles, the victory is ours, because of the Prince, who loves us; the Prince is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, please preserve within us the faith which made St. Bartholomew always loyal to the Prince, and have your Church be the sign of rescue for all the nations of the world. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.

The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Born in 1214 and became King of France at twenty-two. He married and fathered eleven children, who were carefully instructed in Christian life by him. He excelled in penance and prayer and in his love for the poor. While ruling in his kingdom, he had regard not only for peace among peoples and for the temporal good of his subjects, but also for their spiritual welfare. He undertook the Crusades to recover the tomb of the Prince, and died near Carthage in 1270.

*Third Reading*                      *A Spiritual Testament to his Son by St. Louis*

My dearest son, my first instruction is for you to love the Master your God with all your heart and all your strength. Without this, there is no rescue. Keep yourself, my son, from everything that you know displeases God; that is to say, from every mortal sin. You should allow yourself to be tormented by every kind of martyrdom before you would allow yourself to commit a mortal sin.

If the Master has permitted you to have some hardship, bear it willingly and with gratitude, considering that it has happened for your good and that perhaps you richly deserved it. If the Master bestows on you any kind of prosperity, thank him humbly and see that you become no worse for it, either through empty pride or anything else, because you ought not to oppose God or offend him in the matter of his gifts.

Listen to the divine office with pleasure and devotion. As long as you are in church, be careful not to let your eyes wander and not to speak empty words, but pray to the Master devoutly, either aloud or with the interior prayer of the heart.

Be kindhearted to the poor, the unfortunate, and the handicapped; give them as much help and consolation as you can. Thank God for all the benefits he has bestowed on you, so that you will deserve to receive greater ones. Be just to your subjects, and lean neither right nor left; hold the line of justice. Always side with the poor rather than the rich, until you are certain of the truth. See that all your subjects live in justice and peace, but especially those who have ecclesiastical rank and who

belong to religious orders.

Be devout and obedient to our mother the Church of Rome and the Supreme Pontiff as your spiritual father. Work to remove all sin from your land, particularly blasphemies and heresies.

In conclusion, dearest son, I give you every blessing that a loving father can give a son. May the three Persons of the Holy Trinity and all the saints protect you from every harm; and may the Master give you the grace to do his will so that he will be served and honored through you, and so that in the next life we will come together to see him, love him, and praise him without ceasing. Amen.

He did what was pleasing in the Master's sight; no one of all the kings could compare with him. He was loyal to the Master and never turned away from him.

The Master was with him because he kept his commandments; he was loyal to the Master and never turned away from him.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you raised St. Louis from the cares of earthly rule to the glory of your heavenly Kingdom, may we please by the help of his prayers come to your eternal Kingdom by our work here on earth. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Aragon in 1557. He was well educated and became a priest and exercised his ministry in his homeland. Later, he dedicated himself to educating poor boys in Rome and founded a society for that purpose.

#### Third Reading

#### Writings of St. Joseph Calasanz

Everyone knows the great value and dignity attached to that holy service in which young boys, especially the poor, are educated toward

attaining eternal life. This service is directed to the well-being of body and soul; at the same time that it shapes behavior, it also fosters devotion and Christian teaching. In doing this, it performs for the young boys the very same service as that of their guardian angels.

In addition, the strongest support is provided not only to protect the young from evil, but also to rouse them and attract them more easily and gently to the performance of good deeds. Whatever the type or condition, it is well known that when the young are given this help, the change for the better is so great that it becomes impossible to distinguish those who are educated from those who are not. Like the twigs of plants, the young are easily influenced, as long as someone works to change their souls; but if they are allowed to grow hard, we know very well that the possibility of one day bending them diminishes a great deal and is sometimes utterly lost.

Everyone who belongs to the community of human beings, and especially all Christians, praise those who increase the human dignity of young boys, especially poor boys, by giving them a proper education. Above all, parents are happy that their children are led through straight paths. Civil leaders are glad to gain honest subjects and good citizens; the Church is especially joyful that others who love the Prince and report the Good News are added to its following.

Everyone who undertakes teaching must be endowed with deep love, the greatest patience, and most of all, profound humility. They must perform their work with earnest zeal; and then, through their humble prayers, the Master will find them fit to become fellow-workers with him in the cause of truth. He will console them in the fulfillment of this supremely noble duty, and, finally, will enrich them with the gift of heaven.

As Scripture says, "Those who teach many people virtue will shine as stars for all eternity." They will attain this more easily if they make a formal commitment to perpetual obedience and make efforts to cling to the Prince and please him alone, because, in his words, "You did for me whatever you did for the most insignificant of my brothers and sisters."

I have longed to give you the Good News, and more than that, to give you my very life; you have become that dear to me.

My infants, I am like a mother giving birth to you until the Prince is

formed within you; you have become that dear to me.

**Prayer**

Dear Master, since you blessed St. Joseph Calasanz with such love and patience that he dedicated himself to the formation of Christian youth, may we please as we honor this teacher of wisdom follow his example in working for truth. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 27



Born to a Christian family in Tagaste, Africa, in 311. She was married young to Patricius, and one of her children was Augustine, for whom she prayed and wept copiously for his conversion. She is a model of a virtuous mother, and nourished her faith by prayers and gave evidence of it by her actions. Died in Ostia in 387.

*Third Reading*

*Confessions by St. Augustine*

The day was now approaching when my mother Monica would leave this life; you knew what day it would be, Master, even though we did not. She and I happened to be standing by ourselves at a window that overlooked the garden in the courtyard of the house; at the time, we were in Ostia on the Tiber. We had gone there after a long, tiring journey, to get away from the noisy crowd, to rest, and to prepare for our sea voyage.

I believe that you caused all this to happen, Master, in your own mysterious ways; and so the two of us, completely alone, were enjoying a very pleasant conversation, “forgetting the past and pressing on to what is ahead.” We were asking each other in the presence of the Truth—because you are Truth—what it would be like to share the eternal life enjoyed by the saints, which “no eye has seen nor ear heard, which has not even entered a human heart.” We longed with all our hearts to drink from the streams flowing from your heavenly spring, the spring of life.

That was the gist of our talk, though not the exact words; but you



know, Master, that in the course of our conversation that day, the world and its pleasures lost all their attraction for us. My mother said, "My son, as far as I am concerned, nothing in this life gives me any pleasure. I do not know why I am still here, since I have no further hopes in this world. I did have one reason for wanting to live a little longer: to see you become a Catholic Christian before I died. God has lavished his gifts on me in that respect, because I know that you have even given up earthly happiness to be his slave. So what am I doing here?"

I do not really remember how I answered her. Shortly, within five days or thereabouts, she fell sick with a fever. Then one day during the course of her illness, she became unconscious, and for a while she was unaware of her surroundings. My brother and I rushed to her side, but she regained consciousness quickly; she looked at us as we stood there, and asked in a puzzled voice, "Where was I?"

We were overwhelmed with grief, but she held her gaze steadily on us and added, "Here is where you will bury your mother." I remained silent as I held back my tears; but my brother haltingly expressed his hope that she would die in her own land and not in a foreign country, since her end would be happier there. When she heard this, her face filled with anxiety, and she reproached him with a glance because he had entertained such earthly thoughts. Then she looked at me and said, "See what he is saying!"

At this, she said to both of us, "Bury my body wherever you want; care of it should not cause you any concern. I only ask one thing of you, that you remember me at the Master's altar wherever you are." Once our mother had expressed this desire as best she could, she fell silent as the pain of her illness increased.


The time is growing short, so we must be happy as if we were not happy; we must work in the world without becoming involved in it, because the world as we know it is ceasing to exist.

We have not adopted the spirit of the world, because the world as we know it is ceasing to exist.

#### Prayer

Dear God of mercy, comfort of those in sorrow, since the tears of St. Monica moved you to convert her son St. Augustine to the faith of the

Prince, please help us by their prayers to turn from our sins and find your loving forgiveness. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 28  
ugustine  
 Bishop, Doctor

Born in Tagaste, Africa in 354. He led an unsettled life searching for the truth until he was converted in Milan and bathed by Ambrose. After returning to his homeland, he embraced an ascetic life and was elected bishop of Hippo, where he guided his flock for 34 years, producing sermons and numerous writings. Died in 430.

*Third Reading*

*Confessions by St. Augustine*

Since I was encouraged to reflect on myself, I entered the inmost depth of my soul under your guidance; I was only able to do so because “you were my helper.” As I entered myself, I saw with my soul’s eyes, so to speak, what was beyond my soul’s eyes, and beyond my spirit: your immutable light. It was not the ordinary light perceivable by anything material, nor was it merely something brighter but still essentially related to it, shining more clearly and spreading everywhere in its intensity. No, it was something completely distinct, something altogether different from all this; and it did not rest on top of my mind in the way oil rests on the surface of water, nor was it above me in the way in which the sky is above the earth. This light was above me because it had made me; I was below it because I was created by it. The one who has come to know the truth knows this light.

Eternal truth, true love and beloved eternity, you are my God; I sigh after you day and night. When I first came to know you, you drew me to yourself so that I could see that there were things for me to see, but that I was not ready myself to see them. Meanwhile, you conquered the weakness of my vision, radiating out the beams of your light very strongly, and I quaked with love and dread at the same time. I learned that I was in a region unlike yours, and far away from you, and I thought I heard your voice from high above me: “I am food for grown men; and

so grow, and you will feed upon me. But you will not change me into yourself like bodily food; you will be changed into me.”

I tried to find a way to gain the strength I needed for enjoying you; but I did not find it until I clasped “the link and liaison between God and men, the man Jesus the Prince, who is above everyone, God blessed for ever.” He was calling me and saying, “I am the way of truth; I am life.” He was offering the food I had not the strength to take, the food he had combined with our flesh—because “the Word became flesh” so that your wisdom, by which you created everything, would provide milk for us children.

I was late in loving you, Beauty always ancient and always new; it was long before I loved you! You were inside me and I was the one outside, and it was there that I searched for you; in my unloveliness, I plunged into the lovely things you created. You were with me, but I was not with you; created things kept me from you—yet if they had not been in you, they would not have been at all.

You called, you shouted—and you broke through my deafness. You gleamed, you shone, and you dispelled my blindness. You breathed your fragrance on me; I drew in breath, and now I am panting for you. I have tasted you, and now I am hungry and thirsty for more. You touched me, and I burned for your peace.

Truth, you are the light of my heart; have your light speak to me, not my own darkness. I went astray, but I remembered you, and now I am returning, longing and thirsty for your spring of water.

I cannot myself give life; by myself I have lived in the wrong way; but in you I have found life again, and now I am returning, longing and thirsty for your spring of water.

#### Prayer

Master, please renew in your Church the spirit you gave St. Augustine, and may we after being filled with this spirit be thirsty for you alone as the spring of the water of wisdom and look for you as the source of eternal love. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

August 29  

 The Beheading of  
 John the Father

*Third Reading*

*A Homily by St. Bede the Venerable*

As forerunner of our Master's birth, preaching, and death, blessed John showed in his struggle a goodness deserving the sight of heaven. In the words of Scripture, "Though in the sight of men he suffered torments, his hope is full of immortality." It is appropriate for us to commemorate the day of his birth with a joyful celebration, because it is a day which he made festive for us himself through his suffering, and which he adorned with the crimson splendor of his own blood. We are correct in showing reverence to his memory with joyful hearts, because he stamped with the seal of martyrdom the evidence he gave on behalf of the Master.

There is no doubt that blessed John suffered imprisonment and chains as a witness to our Redeemer, whose forerunner he was, and gave his life for him. His persecutor did not demand that he repudiate the Prince, but that he should be quiet about the truth. Still, he died for the Prince; does the Prince not say, "I am truth"? And so, because John shed his blood for the truth, he shed his blood for the Prince.

Through his birth, preaching and bathing, he gave evidence to the coming birth, preaching, and bathing of the Prince; and by his own suffering, he showed that the Prince would suffer also.

This was the quality and strength of the man who accepted the end of this present life by shedding his blood after long imprisonment. He preached the freedom of heavenly peace, and yet was thrown into irons by ungodly men; he was locked away in the darkness of prison, though he came giving evidence of the Light of life, and had the privilege of being called a bright, shining lamp by that Light itself, which is the Prince. John was bathed in his own blood, though he had been privileged to bathe the Redeemer of the world, to hear the voice of the Father above him, and to see the grace of the Holy Spirit descending upon him. But to endure agonies in time for the sake of the truth was

## September 3: Gregory the Great, Pope, Doctor

not a heavy burden for men like John; it was easily carried, and even desirable, because he knew eternal joy would be his reward.

Since death was always close by through the inescapable necessity of nature, men of this type considered it a blessing to embrace it and by doing so to gain the reward of eternal life by acknowledging the name of the Prince. This is why the Emissary Paul correctly says, “you have been granted the privilege not only to believe in the Prince, but to suffer for him.” He tells us why it is the Prince’s gift for his chosen ones to suffer for him: “The sufferings of this present time do not deserve to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us.”

Herod sent out a band of men to arrest John and had him chained and imprisoned on account of his brother Philip’s wife, Herodias, whom he had married.

He sent an executioner who beheaded John in prison on account of his brother Philip’s wife, Herodias, whom he had married.

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you called John the Bather to be the herald of your Son’s birth and death, may we please make an effort to profess our faith in your Good News, just as he gave his life as evidence to truth and virtue. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## September 3 Gregory the Great Pope, Doctor

Born in Rome in 540. He was in public office, but finally resigned the prefecture and entered monastic life. As a deacon, he was legate to Constantinople. He was elected pope on September 3, 590, where he wrote extensively on moral and theological subjects in addition to being noted for helping the poor. Died on March 12, 604.

### Third Reading

*A Homily on Ezekiel by St. Gregory the Great*

“Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel.”

Note that a man the Master sends as a preacher is called a “watchman.” A watchman always stands in a high place so that he can see from far off what is coming; and so anyone appointed to be a watchman for the people must stand on a height for all his life to help them by his foresight.

It is very hard for me to say this, because by these very words I denounce myself. I cannot preach with any competence, and yet, to the extent I succeed, it is still true that I do not myself live my life in accordance with my own preaching.

I do not deny my responsibility; I recognize that I am lazy and negligent; but perhaps the acknowledgment of my fault will win me pardon from my just judge. Actually, when I was in the monastery, I could curb my idle talk and usually be absorbed in prayers; but since I have assumed the burden of pastoral care, my mind can no longer be recollected, because it is concerned with so many matters.

I am forced to consider the affairs of the Church and the monasteries; I must weigh the lives and acts of individuals; I am responsible for the concerns of our citizens; I must worry about the invasions of roving bands of barbarians, and beware of the wolves in ambush for my flock; I must become an administrator to keep the religious from becoming needy; I must put up with some robbers without losing patience, and at times I must deal with them in all charity.

With my mind divided and torn to pieces by so many problems, how can I meditate or preach wholeheartedly without neglecting the service of reporting the Good News? In addition, in my position, I must often communicate with worldly men; at times I let my tongue run, because if I am always severe in my judgments, the worldly will avoid me, and I can never attack them in the way I would like. As a result, I often listen patiently to twaddle; and because I too am weak, I find myself drawn little by little into idle conversation, and I begin to talk freely about matters which once I would have avoided; what I once found tedious, I now enjoy.

So who am I to be a watchman, because I do not stand on the mountain of action, but lie down in the valley of weakness? It is true that the omnipotent Creator and Redeemer of mankind can give me a higher life and effective speech in spite of my weakness; because I love him, I do not spare myself in speaking of him.

He drew his moral and mystical teaching from the source of Holy Scripture; through him the life-giving streams of the Good News flowed out to every nation; though he is dead, he still speaks to us today.

In the way a soaring eagle sees everything on the earth below, he cares for both the great and the small with his all-embracing love; though he is dead, he still speaks to us today.

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since you guide your people with kindness and govern us with love, please, by the prayers of St. Gregory, give the spirit of wisdom to those you have called to lead your Church, and may the growth of your people in holiness be the eternal joy of our shepherds. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*Third Reading*

*A Discourse by St. Andrew of Crete*

“The fulfillment of the Law is the Prince himself,” who does not so much lead us away from the letter as lift us up to the spirit; because the law’s fruition was this: that the lawgiver himself finished his work and changed letter into spirit, summing everything up in himself and, though subject to law, living by grace. He subordinated the law, yet harmoniously united grace with it, not confusing the distinctive characteristics of the one with the other, but managing the transition in a way perfectly fitting for God. He changed whatever was burdensome, slavish, and oppressive into what is light and liberating, so that we would no longer be enslaved “under the elemental spirits of the world,” as the Emissary says, nor held fast as bonded slaves under the letter of the Law.

This is the highest, all-embracing benefit that the Prince has bestowed on us. This is the revelation of the secret; this is the emptying

out of the divine nature, the union of God and man, and the deification of manhood that was assumed. This radiant and manifest coming of God to men unquestionably needed a joyful prelude to introduce the great gift of rescue to us. The present feast, the birth of the Mother of God, is the prelude, while the final act is the union of the Word with flesh. Today the Virgin is born, tended and formed, and prepared for her role as Mother of God, who is the universal King of the ages.

It is appropriate, then, for us to celebrate this mystery, since it signifies a double grace for us. We are led toward the truth, and we are led away from our condition of slavery to the letter of the Law. How can this be? Darkness is yielding to the coming of light, and grace is exchanging legalism for freedom; but midway between the two stands today's mystery, at the frontier where forerunners and symbols give way to reality, and the old is replaced by the new.

And so all creation should sing and dance and unite to make a fitting contribution to the celebration of this day; there should be one common festival for saints in heaven and men on earth; everything, mundane things and those above, should join in festive celebration. Today, this created world is raised to the dignity of a holy place for the one who made everything; the creature is newly prepared to be a divine home for the Creator.

Today let us celebrate with devotion the birth of Mary, the ever-virgin Mother of God, whose splendid life has illuminated the Church.

With heart and mind, let us sing praise and glory to the Prince on this holy feast day of the glorious Virgin Mother of God, whose splendid life has illuminated the Church.

#### Prayer

Dear Father of mercy, please give your people help and strength from heaven, and just as the birth of the Virgin Mary's Son was the dawn of our rescue, may this celebration of her birthday bring us closer to lasting peace. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



## Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.

I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Born in Verdu, Spain in 1580. From 1596, he studied arts and letters at the University of Barcelona, and in 1602, he entered the Jesuits, where, with the help of St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, he followed the call to the missions.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Peter Claver*

Yesterday, May 30, 1627, on the Feast of the Holy Trinity, numerous blacks, brought from the rivers of Africa, disembarked from a large ship. Carrying two baskets of oranges, lemons, cookies, and I don't know what else, we hurried to them. When we neared their quarters, we thought we were entering another Guinea. We had to force our way through the crowd until we reached the sick.

Large numbers of sick were lying on the wet ground—or rather, in puddles of mud. To prevent their getting too wet, someone had thought of building up a mound with a mixture of tiles and broken pieces of bricks; and so this was their couch, a very uncomfortable one, and not only for that reason, but especially because they were naked, without any clothing to protect them.

We laid aside our cloaks, therefore, and brought from a warehouse whatever was handy to build a platform. In that way, we covered a space to which we at last transferred the sick, by forcing a passage through bands of slaves. Then we divided the sick into two groups: one group my companion approached with an interpreter, while I addressed the other. There were two blacks, nearer death than life, already cold, whose pulse could scarcely be detected. With the help of a tile, we pulled some live coals together, and placed them in the middle near the dying men; and into this fire, we tossed aromatics. We had two wallets full of them, and used them all up on this occasion.

Then, using our cloaks, because they had nothing of this sort, and to ask the owners for others would have been a waste of words, we provided

a smoke treatment for them, by which they seemed to recover their warmth and the breath of life. The joy in their eyes as they looked at us was something to see.

This was how we spoke to them—not with words, but with our hands and actions. And in fact, since they were convinced that they had been brought here to be eaten, any other language would have proved utterly useless. Then we sat, or rather knelt, beside them and bathed their faces and bodies with wine; we made every effort to encourage them with friendly gestures, and displayed in their presence the emotions which somehow naturally tend to hearten the sick.

After this, we began an elementary instruction about baptism; that is, the wonderful effects of the sacrament on body and soul. When by their answers to our questions, they showed they had sufficiently understood this, we went on to a more extensive instruction, about the one God, who rewards and punishes each one as he deserves, and the rest. We asked them to make an act of contrition and to show their detestation of their sins. Finally, when they appeared sufficiently prepared, we declared to them the mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Jesus's suffering. Showing them the Prince fastened on the cross, as he is depicted on the baptismal font on which streams of blood flow from his wounds, we led them in reciting an act of contrition in their own language.

I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was homeless and you took me in. Now I tell you this: when you did this to the most neglected of my brothers and sisters, you did it for me.

This is what I command: for you to love each other as I have loved you. Now I tell you this: when you did this to the most neglected of my brothers and sisters, you did it for me.

#### Prayer

Dear God of mercy and love, since you offer every people the dignity of sharing in your life, please strengthen us by the example and prayers of St. Peter Claver to overcome all racial hatreds and to love each other as brothers and sisters. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit

as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

September 13  

**John CHRYSOSTOM**  
 Bishop, Doctor

Born in Antioch around 349. After an extensive education, he lived a life of asceticism. He was ordained priest and distinguished himself by his preaching, for which he was called “Golden Mouth,” and was elected bishop of Constantinople in 397, where he proved himself a capable pastor, committed to reforming the clergy and the faithful. He was forced into exile twice by the hatred of the imperial court and the envy of his enemies. Died in Comana, Pontus on September 14, 407.

*Third Reading*

*A Homily by St. John Chrysostom*

The water has risen and severe storms are on us, but we are not afraid of drowning, because we stand solidly on a rock. Let the sea rage; it cannot break the rock; let the waves rise; they cannot sink the boat of Jesus. What should we be afraid of? Death? “Life means the Prince to me, and death is a gain.” Exile? “The earth and everything that fills it belong to the Master.” The confiscation of our property? “We brought nothing into this world, and we will certainly take nothing from it.” I have only contempt for the world’s threats; I find its blessings laughable. I have no fear of poverty or desire for wealth; I am not afraid of death and do not long to live, except for your good. And so I am concentrating on the present situation, and I urge you, my friends, to have confidence.

Do you not hear the Master say, “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them?” Will he be absent, then, when so many people united in love are gathered? I have his promise; I am certainly not going to rely on my own strength. I have what he has written; that is my staff, my security, my peaceful harbor. Let the world be in upheaval; I hold to his promise and read his message; that is my protecting wall and garrison. What message: “Know that I am with you always, until the end of the world.”

If the Prince is with me, who should I be afraid of? Even though the waves and the sea and the anger of authorities are roused against me, they are less to me than a spider’s web. In fact, if you had not kept me

## September 13: John Chrysostom, Bishop, Doctor

back, my brothers and sisters, I would have left this very day; because I always say, “Master, may your will be done”; not what this or that fellow would have me do, but what you want me to do. That is my strong tower, my immovable rock, my staff that never gives way. If God wants something, let it be done! If he wants me to stay here, I am grateful; but wherever he wants me to be, I am no less grateful.

Yet you too are where I am, and I am where you are; because we are a single body, and the body cannot be separated from the head or the head from the body. Distance separates us, but love unites us, and death itself cannot divide us; because even if my body dies, my soul will live and remember my people.

You are my fellow citizens, my fathers and mothers, my brothers and sisters, my sons and daughters, my limbs, my body. You are my light, more pleasant to me than visible light; because what can the rays of the sun bestow on me that is comparable to your love? The sun’s light is useful in my earthly life, but your love is fashioning a crown for me in the life to come.



Because I report the Good News, I am suffering hardships, even to the point of being thrown into chains like a criminal; but what God says is not chained. I am enduring all this for the sake of the chosen.

The Master is my light and my rescue, who can intimidate me? I am enduring all this for the sake of the chosen.

### Prayer

Dear Father, strength of everyone who puts his trust in you, since you made St. John Chrysostom renowned for his eloquence and heroic in his suffering, may we please learn from his teaching and gain courage from his patient endurance. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

September 14


 TRIUMPH OF THE  CROSS
*Third Reading**A Discourse by St. Andrew of Crete*

We are celebrating the feast of the cross which drove out darkness and brought in the light. As we keep this feast, we are lifted up with the crucified Prince, leaving behind us earth and sin so that we will be able to gain what is above. The cross is such a great, outstanding possession that the one who wins it has won a treasure; and I could appropriately call this treasure the most beautiful thing of all beautiful things, and the most expensive, in fact as well as name; because on it and through it and for its sake the riches of the liberation that had been lost were restored to us.

If there had been no cross, the Prince could not have been crucified; if there had been no cross, life itself could not have been nailed to the tree; and if life had not been nailed to it, there would be no streams of immortality pouring from the Prince's side, blood and water that washed the world clean. The legal bondage of our sin would not have been canceled, we would not have gained our freedom, we would not have enjoyed the fruit of the tree of life, and the gates of paradise would not stand open. If there had been no cross, death would not have been trampled under foot or the land below the earth looted.

And so the cross is something marvelously great and honorable; it is great because through the cross the many noble acts of the Prince found their culmination—in fact, a very great number, because both his miracles and his sufferings were rewarded with victory. The cross is honorable because it is both the sign of God's suffering and the trophy of his victory; it stands for his suffering because on it he freely suffered to death; but it is also his trophy because it was the means by which the devil was wounded and death conquered, the barred gates of the land below the earth smashed, and the cross became the one common rescue of the whole world.

The cross is called the Prince's glory; it is saluted as his triumph. We recognize it as the cup he longed to drink from and the climax of the sufferings he endured for our sake. As to the cross being the Prince's glory, listen to his words: "Now the Son of Man has shown what he

really is, and what God is shown in him; and God will reveal what he is without delay.” And again, “Father, glorify me with the glory I had with you before the world came into existence.” And once more, “Father, show how great your name is; and then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have shown it, and I will again show how great my name is.’” Here he is speaking of the glory that would come to him through the cross. And if you want to understand that the cross is the Prince’s triumph, hear what he also said himself: “When I am lifted up, I will draw everyone to myself.” Now you can see that the cross is the Prince’s glory and triumph.

Glorious cross, your arms upheld the priceless ransom of captive mankind; through you the world has been saved by the blood of the Master.

We salute you, noble cross, consecrated by the body of the Prince; his limbs have made your wood more noble than precious pearls; through you the world has been saved by the blood of the Master.


#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since your only Son, in obedience to you, accepted death on the cross for mankind’s rescue, as we acknowledge the mystery of the cross on earth, may we please receive the gift of redemption in heaven. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”

The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

September 15  
 UR  ΔDY OF  MORROWS

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Bernard*

The Virgin's martyrdom is laid out both in Simeon's prophesy and in the actual story of our Master's suffering. The holy man said of the infant Jesus, "He is here as evidence which will be attacked," and he



went on to tell Mary, “and your own heart will be pierced by a sword.”

Yes, blessed Mother, a sword pierced your heart; because only by passing through your heart could the sword enter your son’s flesh. In fact, after your Jesus—who is everyone’s but especially yours—gave up his life, the cruel spear, which was not kept from his lifeless body, tore open his side. Clearly, it did not touch his soul and could not harm him; but it did pierce your heart; that is, his soul was certainly no longer there, but yours could not be torn away. And so the violence of suffering has cut through to your heart, and we are right to call you more than martyr, since the effect of your empathy has gone beyond the endurance of physical suffering.

Or were those words, “Madam, there is your son,” not more than a sword to you, really piercing your heart, cutting through to the division between soul and spirit? What an exchange! John is given to you in place of Jesus: the servant in place of the Master, the student in the place of the teacher, the son of Zebedee in the place of the Son of God, a mere man replacing God himself. How could these words not pierce your loving heart, when the mere remembrance of them breaks out, even though they are hearts of stone and iron.

Do not be surprised, my brothers, that Mary is said to be a martyr in spirit; a person who does not remember the words of Paul is the one who should be surprised: that one of the greatest crimes of the Gentiles were that they were without love. That was far from the heart of Mary; it should be far from her servants.

But someone might perhaps say, “Had she not known before this that he would die?” Undoubtedly. “Did she not expect him to come back to life at once?” Certainly. “And still she was in anguish over her crucified son?” Intensely. Who are you and what is the source of your wisdom that you are more surprised at Mary’s empathy than at the suffering of Mary’s son? If he could die physically, could she not die with him in spirit? He died in his body through a love greater than anyone had known; she died in spirit through a love unlike any other since his.

When they came to the place called “Skull,” they crucified Jesus there; his mother stood beside his cross.

A sword of suffering pierced her blameless heart; his mother stood beside his cross.

## Prayer

Dear Father, since, as your Son was lifted up on the cross, his mother stood beside him, sharing his sufferings, may your Church please be united with the Prince in his suffering and death and so come to share in his rising to new life, where he is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

September 16

ORNELIUS, pope  
and YPRIAN, Bishop  
both MARTYRS

Cornelius was ordained Bishop of Rome in 251, where he fought against the Novatian schismatics and with the help of Cyprian was able to enforce his authority. He was driven into exile by Emperor Gallus, and died in 253 in Civitavecchia. His body was brought to Rome and buried in the cemetery of St. Callistus. Cyprian was born to pagan parents in Carthage around 210. After conversion, he was ordained and then made Bishop of Carthage in 249. By his writings and actions, Cyprian guided the Church through difficult times. He was exiled in the persecution of Valerian, and martyred on September 14, 258.

*Third Reading**The Proconsular Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Cyprian*

On the morning of the fourteenth of September, a great crowd gathered at the Villa Sexti, in accordance with the order of the governor Galerius Maximus. That same day, the governor commanded Bishop Cyprian to be brought before him to be tried in the court of Sauciorum.

After Cyprian was brought in, the governor asked him, "Are you Thascius Cyprian?" "Yes, I am," replied the bishop.

The governor Galerius Maximus said, "Have you posed as pontiff of a sacrilegious group," and the bishop answered, "I have."

Then the governor said, "Our supremely venerable emperors have commanded you to perform the religious rites," and Bishop Cyprian replied, "I will not do so."

Galerius Maximus said, "Consider your position," and Cyprian

September 16: Cornelius, Pope      291  
and Cyprian, Bishop; both Martyrs

answered, "Follow your orders. In such a just cause, there is no need for deliberation."

Then Galerius Maximus, after consulting with his council, reluctantly issued the following judgment: "You have lived for a long time with your sacrilegious convictions, and have gathered about yourself many others in a vicious conspiracy. You have set yourself up as an enemy of the gods of Rome and our religious practices. The pious and venerable emperors, the Augusti, Valerian and Gallienus, and Valerian the most noble of Caesars, have been unable to draw you back to the observance of their holy ceremonies. You have been discovered as the author and leader of these heinous crimes, and will consequently be held up as an example for all those who have followed you in your crime. By your blood the law shall be confirmed." Next, he read the sentence from a tablet: "It is decided that Thascius Cyprian is to die by the sword." Cyprian responded, "Thank God!"

After the sentence was passed, a crowd of his fellow Christians said, "We want to be killed along with him too!" There arose an uproar among the Christians, and a great mob followed him. Cyprian was then brought out to the grounds of the Villa Sexti, where, taking off his outer cloak and kneeling on the ground, he fell before the Master in prayer. He removed his dalmatic and gave it to the deacons, and then stood erect waiting for the executioner. When the executioner arrived, Cyprian told his friends to give the man twenty-five gold pieces. Cloths and napkins were being spread out in front of him by the brothers; then blessed Cyprian covered his eyes with his own hands; but when he was unable to tie the ends of the linen himself, the priest Julian and the sub-deacon Julian fastened them for him.

In this way, blessed Cyprian suffered, and his body was laid out at a nearby place to satisfy the curiosity of the pagans. During the night, Cyprian's body was triumphantly carried away in a procession of Christians who, praying and bearing tapers and torches, took the body to the cemetery of the governor Macrobius Cadidianus, which lies on the Mappalian Way near the fish ponds. Not many days later, the governor Galerius Maximus died.

The supremely blessed martyr Cyprian suffered on the fourteenth of September under the emperors Valerian and Gallienus, in the reign of

our real Master Prince Jesus, to whom belong honor and glory through all the ages of ages. Amen.

**Prayer**

Dear God, our Father, since in Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian you have given your people an inspiring example of dedication to pastoral service and constant witness to the Prince in their suffering, may their prayers and faith please give us courage to work for the unity of your Church. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

September 17  

**ROBERT BELLARMINÉ**  
 Bishop, Doctor

Born in 1542 in Monte Pulciano, Tuscany. He became a Jesuit and after ordination as priest he distinguished himself in brilliant disputations in defense of Catholicism. He also taught theology at the Roman College. He was elected Cardinal and named Bishop of Capua. Died in Rome in 1627.

*Third Reading*

*On the Ascent of the Mind to God  
 by St. Robert Bellarmine*

“Beloved Master, you are meek and merciful.” Would anyone not give himself wholeheartedly to your service if he began to taste even a little of your fatherly rule? What is the command, Master, that you give your slaves? “Buckle on my harness,” you say. And what is this harness of yours like? “My harness does not chafe,” you say, “and my burden is light.” Who would not be glad to wear a harness that does not chafe but caresses? Who would not be glad for a burden that did not weigh heavily and refreshes? And so you were right to add, “And you will find rest for your souls.” And what is this harness of yours that does not chafe and gives rest? It is, of course, that first and greatest commandment, “You are to love your Master God with all your heart.” What is easier, more congenial, more pleasant, than to love goodness, beauty, and love, the fullness of which you are, Master, my God?

## SEPTEMBER 17: ROBERT BELLARMINÉ, BISHOP, DOCTOR

Is it not true that you promise those who keep your commandments a reward more desirable than great wealth and sweeter than honey? You promise a supremely abundant reward, because as your Emissary James says, “The Master has prepared a crown of life for those who love him.” What is this crown of life? It is certainly a greater good than we can conceive of or desire, as St. Paul says, quoting Isaiah: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered man’s heart to conceive what God has prepared for those who love him.”

Actually, then, the payment is great for those who keep your commandments. That first and greatest commandment helps the man who obeys, not the God who commands it; and in addition, the other commandments of God improve the man who obeys them. They provide him with what he needs; they instruct and illuminate him, and make him good and successful. If you are wise, then, know that you have been created for the glory of God and your own eternal rescue. This is your goal; this is the center of your life; this is the treasure of your heart. If you reach this goal, you will find happiness; if you fail to reach it, you will find misery.

You should consider as really good whatever leads to your goal and really bad whatever makes you fall away from it. Prosperity and hardship, wealth and poverty, health and sickness, honors and humiliations, life and death in the mind of a wise man are not to be pursued for their own sake or avoided for their own sake; if they contribute to the glory of God and your own happiness, then they are good and should be pursued; if they reduce this, they are bad and must be avoided.

Knowledge will be kept safe in the mouth of a priest, and men will look for instruction from his lips, because he is the messenger of the Master of Armies.

A bishop should be God’s caretaker, so that he can encourage his hearers with healthy teaching, because he is the messenger of the Master of Armies.

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you gave St. Robert Bellarmine wisdom and goodness to defend the faith of your Church, may we by his prayers please always find our joy in the profession of our faith. We make this

request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



St. Januarius, Bishop of Benevento, was martyred along with his companions in Naples during the persecution of Diocletian (ca. 300). Today, he is specially venerated in Naples.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

The day I became a bishop, a burden was laid on my shoulders that I will have a hard time giving an account for. The honors I receive are an ever-present cause of uneasiness for me; in fact, it terrifies me to think that I could take more pleasure in the honor attached to my office, which is where the danger lies, than in your rescue, which ought to be its result. This is why being set above you fills me with alarm, while being with you gives me comfort. Danger lies in the first; rescue in the second.

To be honest with you, my obligations involve me in so much turmoil that I feel as if I were tossed around by storms in a vast ocean. When I remember whose blood redeemed me, the thought brings me peace, as though I were entering the safety of a harbor; and I am consoled in carrying out the laborious tasks of my own particular office by the blessings we all have in common. And so, by finding my chief joy in the redemption, which I share with you, and not in my office, which places me over you, I will be more truly your servant—and in this way not only fulfill the Master’s command, but also show myself not ungrateful to him for making me your fellow slave. That is, my Redeemer has a claim on my love, and I do not forget how he questioned Peter: “Do you love me, Peter? Then feed my sheep.” He asked this once, and then again and then a third time. He inquired about his love, and then gave him work to do, because the greater one’s love is, the easier is the work.

“How am I to repay the Master for all the blessings he has given

## September 19: JANUARIUS, BISHOP, MARTYR 295

me?” I could say perhaps that I repay him by feeding his sheep; but even though I do this, “I am not really the one who do it, it is the grace of God inside me.” So when all I do is the gift of God’s grace, how can I possibly repay him? As a matter of fact, I hope to be repaid myself, and this for the very reason that I love him freely and feed his sheep. But, you may ask, if I feed his sheep because I love him freely, how can I ask for payment for feeding them? It is actually unthinkable to ask for a return on love freely given unless that return is the loved one himself.

But even if feeding his sheep could repay him for redeeming me, what could repay him for having made me his shepherd? To be a good shepherd, I depend entirely on his grace, because without his help, I would be a very bad one, since there is so much evil in me. So pray for me to be a good shepherd, not a bad one.

And for you, my brothers and sisters, “I also pray and warn you against failing to cooperate with the grace you receive from God.” Make my ministry, please, a fruitful one. You are God’s garden, and you should therefore welcome the laborer who does the visible work of planting and watering the seed, even though the growth comes from the one who is working invisibly inside you. Please help me both by your prayers and your obedience, because then it will be a pleasure for me, not to preside over you, but to serve you.

He was a true martyr, who shed his blood for the name of the Prince. Since he was fearless of the threats of judges and indifferent to worldly honors, he attained the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Master guided the virtuous man on the right path and showed him God’s Kingdom. Since he was fearless of the threats of judges and indifferent to worldly honors, he attained the Kingdom of Heaven.

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, please enable those of us who honor the memory of St. Januarius to share the joy of eternal life with him. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

September 20  
 Andrew Kim Taegon, Priest  
 Paul Chong Hasang  
 and Companions  
 All Martyrs

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, through the efforts of several laymen, the Christian faith reached Korea, where a strong a vital Christian community flourished under lay leadership, until 1836, when in secret, members of the Paris Foreign Mission Society entered the country. During the persecutions of 1839, 1866, and 1867, 103 members of the community were martyred, among them the first Korean priest Andrew Kim Taegon and the lay Emissary Paul Chong Hasang. Among the other martyrs were bishops and priests, but for the most part laity, men and women, children, and the elderly.

*Third Reading*

*Final Exhortation by St. Andrew Kim Taegon*

My brothers and sisters, my dearest friends, think again and again about this: God has ruled over everything in heaven and earth from the beginning of time; then reflect on why and for what purpose he chose each of us to be created in his own image and likeness.

In this world of dangers and hardship, if we did not recognize the Master as our Creator, there would be no benefit either in being born or in our continued existence. We have come into this world by God's grace; by that same grace we have received the Bath, entrance into the Church, and the honor of being called Christians. Yet what good will this do us if we are Christians only in name and not in fact? We would have come into the world for nothing, we would have entered the Church for nothing, and we would have betrayed even God and his grace. It would be better never to have been born than to receive the grace of God and then to sin against him.

Look at the farmer who cultivates his rice fields. In season he plows, then fertilizes the earth; never counting the cost, he labors under the sun to nurture the seed he has planted. When harvest time comes and the rice crop is abundant, forgetting his labor and sweat, he is overjoyed in his



September 20: Andrew Kim Taegon, Priest<sup>297</sup>  
Paul Chong Hasang, and Companions, All Martyrs

exultant heart. But if the crop is sparse and there is nothing but straw and husks, the farmer broods over his drudgery and sweat and turns his back on that field with a disgust that is all the greater the harder he has labored.

The Master is like a farmer, and we are the field of rice that he fertilizes with his grace, and by the mystery of the incarnation and the redemption irrigates with his blood, so that we will grow and reach maturity. When harvest-time comes, the day of judgment, those who have grown to maturity in the grace of God will find the joy of adopted children in the Kingdom of Heaven; those who have not grown to maturity will become God's enemies and, even though they were once his children, will receive a punishment appropriate to what they have done for all eternity.

My very dear brother and sisters, when he was in this world, Master Jesus took on countless sorrows, and by his own suffering and death, he founded his Church; now he gives it increase through the sufferings of his faithful ones. No matter how fiercely the powers of this world oppress and oppose the Church, they will never bring it down. Ever since his ascension and from the time of his Emissaries to the present, Master Jesus has made his Church grow in the midst of hardship.

For the last sixty years, ever since the coming of the Church to our own land of Korea, the faithful have suffered persecution over and over again. Persecution still rages, and as a result, many of those who are friends in the household of the faith, myself among them, have been thrown into prison, and like you are experiencing severe torment. Because we have become a single Body, should our hearts not be grieved for the parts of it that are suffering? Because of the human ties that bind us, should we not feel deeply the pain of our separation?

But, as the Scriptures say, God has a record of the very hairs on our head, and in his all-embracing providence, he exercises care over all of us; and so persecution can only be regarded as the command of the Master or as a prize he gives, or as a punishment he permits.

Hold fast, then, to the will of God and with all your heart fight the good fight under the leadership of Jesus; conquer again the diabolical power of this world that the Prince has already overcome.

I beg you not to fail in your love for each other, and to support each

other and stand fast until the Master mercifully frees us from our troubles.

There are twenty of us in this place, and by God's grace we are so far all well. If any of us is executed, I ask you not to forget our families. I have many things to say, yet how can pen and paper capture what I feel? As we all near the final ordeal, I urge you to remain steadfast in faith, so that we will all finally reach heaven and be happy there together. I embrace all of you with love.

These are the martyrs who gave evidence to the Prince; as they praised the Master, they had no fear of harm; the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.

They are as if unknown, and yet are well known; as if dying, and yet still alive; as if they had nothing, and yet they own everything; the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.

#### Prayer

Dear God, since you created all the nations and are their rescue, and since in the land of Korea your call to Catholic faith formed a people of adoption, whose growth you nurtured by the blood of Andrew, Paul, and their companions, please grant us, through their martyrdom and intercessions, strength to remain faithful to your commandments even to death. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

September 21



Matthew

EMISSARY, EVANGELIST

#### Third Reading

*A Homily by St. Bede the Venerable*

“Jesus saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office, and he told him, ‘Follow me.’” Jesus saw Matthew, not merely in the usual sense, but more significantly with his merciful understanding of men.

He saw the tax-collector and, because he saw him through the eyes of mercy and chose him, he said to him, “Follow me.” This following

## September 21: Matthew, Emissary, Evangelist

meant imitating the pattern of his life, not just walking after him. St. John tells us, “Anyone who says that he remains in the Prince ought to walk in the same path in which he walked.”

“And he got up and followed him.” There is no reason for surprise that the tax-collector abandoned earthly wealth as soon as the Master had commanded him. Nor should one be amazed that in neglecting his wealth, he joined a band of men whose leader had, in Matthew’s assessment, no riches at all. Our Master summoned Matthew by speaking to him in words; by an invisible, interior impulse flooding his mind with the light of grace, he instructed him to walk in his footsteps. In this way, Matthew could understand that the Prince, who was summoning him away from earthly possessions, had incorruptible treasures of heaven in his gift.

“As he sat at dinner in the house, there came many tax-collectors and sinners who sat down with Jesus and his students.” This conversion of one tax-collector gave many men, those from his own profession and other sinners, an example of repentance and pardon. Notice also the happy and true anticipation of his future status as Emissary and teacher of nations. No sooner was he converted than Matthew drew after him a whole crowd of sinners along the same road to rescue. He took up his appointed duties while still taking his first steps in the faith, and from that hour he fulfilled his obligation and thus grew in what he deserved.

To see a deeper understanding of the great celebration Matthew held at his house, we must realize that he not only gave a banquet for the Master at his earthly residence, but that the banquet set in his own heart which he provided through faith and love was far more pleasing. Our Savior attests to this: “Now I am standing at the door and knocking; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to his house and dine with him, and he will dine with me.”

On hearing the Prince’s voice, we open the door to receive him, so to speak, when we freely assent to his promptings and when we give ourselves over to doing what must be done. The Prince, since he lives in the hearts of his chosen people through the grace of his love, enters to eat with us and for us to eat with him. He always refreshes us by the light of his presence insofar as we progress in our devotion to and longing for what is in heaven. He is himself delighted by such a pleasing banquet.

Matthew was a talented scribe, deeply versed in the Master's law; he dedicated all his efforts to the study of God's law so that with the Master's guidance he could observe his regulations and teach them to others.

The Good News of God's glory is attributed to him; he dedicated all his efforts to the study of God's law so that with the Master's guidance he could observe his regulations and teach them to others.

#### Prayer

Dear God of mercy, since you chose a tax-collector, St. Matthew, to share the dignity of the Emissaries, please help us by his example and prayers to follow the Prince and remain faithful in your service. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
 and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
 You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
 the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
 And as you undertook to set man free,

## September 26: COSMAS AND DAMIAN, MARTYRS

you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Their tomb is at Cyrrhus in Syria. A basilica was built there in their honor.

### *Third Reading*

### *A Sermon by St. Augustine*

In the glorious deeds of the holy martyrs who adorn the Church everywhere, we verify the truth of what we have been singing: "The death of the holy people is valuable in the Master's sight." They are valuable in our sight and in the sight of the one in whose name the act was done.

The price paid for these deaths was the death of one man. This one man paid for so very many deaths by dying, because if he had not died, the grain of wheat would not have multiplied. You have heard what he said as he neared his suffering, which is our redemption: "If a grain of

wheat does not fall to the ground and die, it remains alone; but if it dies, it multiplies itself many times over.”

On the cross, the Prince brought about a great transaction; there, the purse containing the price to be paid for us was opened. When the soldier’s lance cut its way into his side, the price paid for the whole world flowed out. The martyrs and all the faithful were bought with it, but the faith of the martyrs was also tested: their blood gave evidence of their faith. They gave back what had been paid for them and lived up to what St. John says, “We should give up our lives for our brothers and sisters, just as the Prince gave up his life for us.” And elsewhere, we read, “You have taken your seat at the great table; consider carefully what is set before you, because you must prepare the same in return.” The great table is the one at which the Master of the banquet is himself the food. No one feeds his guests with his very self, and yet that is what the Master the Prince does; he invites, and he is the food and drink. The martyrs took careful note of what they ate and drank, so that they could return the same thing.

But how could they return the same thing unless the one who had first given it also gave them the means of making a return? “What will I give back to the Master for all he has given me? I will take the cup that saved me.” What cup is that? The bitter, salutary cup of suffering; the cup a sick man would be afraid to put to his lips unless the doctor had drunk from it first. That is the cup meant here, and we find the Prince himself speaking of it: “Father if it is possible, let this cup pass me by.” The martyrs said of it, “I will take the cup that saved me and call upon the Master’s name.”

Are you afraid that you will fail the test? But why should you be? “I will call upon the Master’s name.” How else did the martyrs win the battle, except that in them he won it and said, “Be glad; I have won the battle with the world.” The Master of heaven directed their minds and tongues; through them he beat the devil on earth and crowned them as martyrs in heaven. It is a blessing for them to have drunk from this cup, because their suffering is over, and they have received their honors.

These holy men poured out their blood for the Master; they loved the Prince in life; they followed him in his death. They have won the glorious crown.

## September 27: Vincent de Paul, Priest 303

They shared the one spirit; they held fast to the one faith; they have won the glorious crown.

### Prayer

Dear Master, since we honor the memory of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, please accept our grateful praise for raising them to eternal glory and for giving us your fatherly care. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Gascony in 1581. After ordination, he went to Paris and served in a parish. He founded the Congregation of the Mission to supervise the formation of priests and to give support to the poor, and also, with the help of St. Louise de Marillac, he founded the Congregation of the Daughters of Charity. Died in Paris in 1660.

### Third Reading

### A Writing by St. Vincent de Paul

Even though the poor are often rough and unrefined, we must not judge them from external appearances, nor from the mental gifts they seem to have received. No, if you consider the poor in the light of faith, then you will notice that they are taking the place of the Son of God, who chose to be poor. Although in his suffering, he almost lost the appearance of a man and considered a fool by the Gentiles and a shocking thing by the Judeans, he showed them that his mission was to report good news to the poor: "He sent me to report good news to the poor." We also ought to have this same spirit and imitate the Prince's actions; that is, we must take care of the poor, comfort them, help them, and support their cause.

Since the Prince also willed to be born poor, he chose for himself students who were poor. He made himself the servant of the poor and shared their poverty; he went so far as to say that he would consider every deed which either helps or harms the poor as done for or against himself. Since God certainly loves the poor, he also loves those who love

the poor; because when one person holds another dear, he also includes in his affection anyone who loves or serves the one he loves.

That is why we hope that God will love us, for the sake of the poor. So when we visit the poor and needy, we try to be understanding where they are concerned. We sympathize with them so fully that we can echo Paul's words, "I have become everything to everyone." And so we must try to be stirred by our neighbors' worries and sufferings. We must beg God to pour into our hearts feelings of pity and sympathy, and to fill them again and again with these attitudes.

It is our duty to prefer the service of the poor to everything else, and offer this service as quickly as possible. If a needy person requires medicine or other help during prayer time, do whatever has to be done with peace of mind. Offer the deed to God as your prayer; do not become upset or feel guilty because you interrupted your prayer to serve the poor. God is not neglected if you leave him for this kind of service; one of God's works is merely interrupted so that another can be carried out.

So when you leave prayer to serve some poor person, remember that this very service is performed for God. Charity is certainly greater than any rule; in fact, all rules must lead to charity. Since charity is a noble mistress, we must do whatever she commands. And so, we must serve the poor with renewed devotion, especially outcasts and beggars. They have been given to us as our masters and patrons.

Though I am not in slavery to anyone, I have become a slave to everyone; I have become weak to the weak—I became everything to everyone so that I could save at least some of them.

I was eyes for the blind and feet for the lame; I was a father to the poor. I became everything to everyone so that I could save at least some of them.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you gave St. Vincent de Paul the courage and holiness of an Emissary for the well-being of the poor and the formation of the clergy, please help us to be zealous in continuing his work. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God,



through all the ages of ages. Amen.

September 28  
enceslaus  
MARTYR

Born in Bohemia around 907, and was brought up as a Christian by his aunt. He became king around 925, and after many difficulties in ruling his subjects, he was betrayed by his brother Boleslaus and killed by assassins in 935, and was immediately recognized as a martyr. He became the patron of Bohemia.

*Third Reading*

*Old Slavic Legend*

After the death of Vratislaus, the people of Bohemia made his son Wenceslaus their king. He was by God's grace a man of supreme faith; he was charitable to the poor, and would clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and take in travelers as the Good News commanded. He would not allow widows to be taken advantage of; he loved all his people, both rich and poor; he also provided for God's slaves and decorated many churches.

The men of Bohemia, however, became arrogant and won over his younger brother Boleslaus. They told him, "Your brother Wenceslaus is conspiring with his mother to have you killed."

On the feasts of the dedication of the churches in various cities, Wenceslaus used to pay them a visit. One Sunday, he entered the city of Boleslaus on the feast of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, and after attending Mass, he planned to return to Prague; but Boleslaus, following his evil plan, detained him with the words, "Why are you leaving, brother?" The next morning when they rang the bell for Matins, Wenceslaus, who heard the sounds, said, "Praise to you, Master; you have allowed me to live until morning." So he rose and went to Matins.

Boleslaus followed immediately after him to the church door; and Wenceslaus looked back at him and said, "Brother, you were a good subject of mine yesterday." But the devil had already blocked Boleslaus' ears and perverted his heart; he drew his sword and answered, "And now I intend to be a better one!" and as he said this, he struck his brother's

head with his sword.

But Wenceslaus turned and said, “Brother, what are you trying to do?” and grabbed Boleslaus and threw him to the ground. But one of Boleslaus’ advisors ran up and stabbed Wenceslaus in the hand; and with his hand wounded, he let his brother go and took refuge in the church. But two evil men struck him down at the church door; and then another rushed up and ran him through with a sword. At this, Wenceslaus died with these words, “Master I commend my spirit into your hands.”

A virtuous man will blossom like a lily; he will flourish forever in the Master’s house.

He will be planted in the Master’s house; in the courts of the house of our God; he will flourish forever in the Master’s house.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you taught your martyr Wenceslaus to prefer the Kingdom of Heaven to all the earth has to offer, may his prayers please free us from our self-seeking and help us to serve you with all our hearts. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also September 28  
AWRENCE UIZ  
 AND COMPANIONS  
 MARTYRS

Between 1633-1637, sixteen martyrs, Lawrence Ruiz and his companions, died out of love for the Prince in Nagasaki, Japan. They were Dominicans, including nine priests, two religious, two virgins, and three laymen, one of whom is the Filipino husband and father, Lawrence Ruiz. In various times and circumstances they spread the Catholic faith in the Philippine Islands, Formosa, and Japan.

ALSO SEPTEMBER 28: LAWRENCE RUIZ 307  
AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

*Fourth Reading*

*A Homily by Pope John Paul II*

In accordance with his promise in the Good News, the Prince really acknowledges in the presence of his Father in heaven those faithful martyrs who acknowledged him before men and women.

The hymn of glory to God which has just been sung by innumerable voices is an echo of the Te Deum sung in the Church of Santo Domingo on the evening of December 27, 1637, when the news arrived of the martyrdom of a group of six Christians at Nagasaki. Among them were the head of the mission, Fr. Antonio Gonzales, a Spanish Dominican from Leon, and Lawrence Ruiz, a married man with a family, born in Manila “extra muros” in the suburb of Binondo.

These witnesses also had in their turn sung psalms to the Master of mercy and power while they were in prison and when they were put to death, a martyrdom that lasted three days.

Faith conquers the world. The preaching of this faith illuminates like the sun everyone who wishes to attain the knowledge of truth; because, though there are different languages in the world, the Christian tradition remains one and the same.

Master Jesus really redeemed by his blood his slaves gathered from every race, tongue, people, and nation, to make them a royal priesthood for our God.

The sixteen blessed martyrs, by the exercise of their priesthood—the priesthood of the Bath or holy orders—performed the greatest act of worship and love of God by the shedding of their blood, united with the Prince’s sacrifice on the cross. In this way, they imitated the Prince as the priest and victim in the most perfect way possible for human creatures. It was at the same time an act of the greatest possible love for their brothers and sisters, for whose sake we are all called to sacrifice ourselves, following the example of the Son of God, who sacrificed himself for us.

This is what Lawrence Ruiz did. Guided by the Holy Spirit to an unexpected goal after an adventurous journey, he told the judges that he was a Christian, and must die for God. “If I had a thousand lives, I would gladly offer all of them for him. I will never apostatize. You may kill me, if that is what you want; to die for God is what my will is.”

Here we have a summary of his life; here we have a description of his faith and the reason of his death. It was at this moment that this young

father of a family professed and brought to completion the Christian catechesis that he had received in the Dominican Friars' school in Binondo: a catechesis that has its sole center in the Prince, because the Prince is its object, and it is the Prince who teaches through the lips of his messenger.

The example of Lawrence Ruiz, the son of a Chinese father and Tagala mother, reminds us that everyone's life, and the whole of anyone's life, must be Prince-directed. Because this is what it means to be a Christian: to offer oneself every day in response to the gift of the Prince, who came into the world so that everyone would have life and have it to the full.

These holy men and women poured out their blood for the Master; they loved the Prince in life; they followed him in his death. They have won the glorious winner's crown.

They shared the one Spirit; they held fast to one faith. They have won the glorious winner's crown.

#### Prayer

Dear Master God, in our service to you and our neighbors, please give us the patience of the holy martyrs Lawrence and his companions, because those who undergo persecution for their virtue are blessed by being in the Kingdom of Heaven. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



September 29

## Archangels Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael

*Holy Reading*

*A Homily on the Reports of the Good News  
by St. Gregory the Great*

You should be aware that the word “angel” refers to a function rather than a nature. These holy spirits of heaven have in fact always been spirits; but they can only be called “angels” when they deliver some message. In addition, those who deliver messages of lesser importance are the ones called “angels,” while those who announce messages of supreme importance are called “archangels.”

So it was the archangel Gabriel, not merely an angel, who was sent to the Virgin Mary. It was only fitting that the highest angel would come to announce the greatest of all messages.

Some angels are given proper names to indicate the service they are authorized to perform. In that holy city where perfect knowledge flows from the vision of the omnipotent God, those who have no names will easily be able to be known; but personal names are assigned to some, not because they could not be known without them, but to indicate their service when they come among us. Thus, Michael means, “Who is like God?”; Gabriel is “The Strength of God”; and Raphael is “God’s Remedy.”

Whenever some act of wondrous power must be performed, Michael is sent, so that his action and name will make it clear that no one can do what God does by his power. It was in this way also that our ancient enemy wanted to be like God, when he said, “I will go up to heaven; I will lift my throne up above the sky itself; I will be like the Supreme Being.” He will be allowed to remain in power until the end of the world, when he will be destroyed in the final punishment. Then he will fight with the archangel Michael, as we are told by John: “A battle was fought with Michael the archangel.”

So too Gabriel, who is called God’s strength, was sent to Mary. He came to announce the One who appeared as a humble man to quell the

powers of the universe. Thus, God's strength announced the coming of the Master of the heavenly powers, who is mighty in battle.

"Raphael" means, as I said, God's remedy, because when he touched Tobit's eyes to cure him, he expelled the darkness of his blindness. Thus, since he is to heal, he is appropriately called God's remedy.

An angel stood by the altar, holding a golden censer; a large quantity of incense was given to him, and clouds of incense rose from the hand of the angel in the presence of the Master.

Thousands upon thousands waited upon him and millions upon millions stood before him, and clouds of incense rose from the hand of the angel in the presence of the Master.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you guide in a wonderful way the actions of angels and men, may those who serve you constantly in heaven keep our lives safe from harm on earth. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,  
 the venerable guild of Prophets,  
 the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
 the holy Church throughout the world acclaims you  
 as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
 your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,

## SEPTEMBER 30: JEROME, PRIEST AND DOCTOR 311

and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Born in Stridon, Dalmatia around 340. He studied classics at Rome, where he was Bathed. He embraced a life of asceticism and went to the East, where he was ordained. Returning to Rome, he became secretary to Pope Damasus. At Rome, he translated the Scriptures into Latin and promoted the monastic life. Died in Bethlehem in 420.

### *Third Reading*

### *A Commentary on Isaiah by St. Jerome*

I interpret in the way I should, following the command of the Prince: "Search the Scriptures. Look and you will find what you are looking for." The Prince will not say to me what he told the Judeans: "You were

mistaken because you did not know the Scriptures and the power of God.” You see, if, as Paul says, the Prince is the power of God and the wisdom of God, and if the man who does not know Scripture does not know the power and wisdom of God, then ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of the Prince.

And so I will imitate the head of a household who brings out of his storehouse both what is new and what is old, and says to his wife in the Song of Songs, “I have kept for you something new and something old, my love.” Let me explain Isaiah in this way, to show that he was not only a prophet but an evangelist and an Emissary as well; because he says about himself and the other evangelists, “How beautiful are the feet of those who report good news and those who announce peace.” And God speaks to him as if he were an Emissary: “Whom will I send? Who will go to my people?” And he answers, “I am here; send me.”

No one should think that I mean to explain the entire subject matter of this great book of Scripture in one brief sermon, since it contains all the mysteries of the Master. It prophesies that Emmanuel is to be born from a virgin and achieve marvelous deeds and miracles. It predicts the death, burial, and return to life from the dead as the Savior of everyone. I need say nothing about the natural sciences, ethics, and logic; whatever is proper to holy Scripture, whatever can be expressed in human language and understood by the human mind, is contained in the book of Isaiah.

The author himself testifies about these mysteries, when he writes, “You will be given a vision of everything, like words on a sealed scroll. When people give the writings to a wise man, they will say, ‘Read this,’ and he will reply, ‘I cannot, because it is sealed.’ And when the scroll is given to an uneducated man and he is told to read it, he will answer, ‘I do not know how to read.’”

If this argument appears weak to anyone, he should listen to the Emissary. “Two or three prophets should speak, and others interpret them; but if a revelation happens to come to one of the people seated there, the first one should be quiet.” How can they be silent, since it depends on the Spirit who speaks through his prophets whether they remain silent or speak? If they understood what they were saying, everything would be full of wisdom and knowledge; but it was not the air vibrating with the human voice that reached their ears, it was God speaking within the souls of the prophets, just as another prophet says,



## October 1: Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Virgin

“It is an angel who spoke to me”; and again, “As we cry out in our hearts, ‘Abba!’ ‘Dad!’ I will listen to what the Master is saying inside me.”

All Scripture is inspired by God and is valuable for teaching and showing the way to holiness, so that a man of God will be fully qualified and equipped for every good deed.

A wise son is one who keeps God’s law, so that a man of God will be fully qualified and equipped for every good deed.

### Prayer

Dear Father, since you gave St. Jerome pleasure in his study of holy Scripture, may your people find in your utterances the food that rescues them and the wellspring of life. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## October 1 Thérèse of the Child Jesus Virgin

Born at Alençon, France in 1873. She entered the Carmelites in Lisieux while young, and lived a life of humility, evangelical simplicity and trust in God. She taught these virtues to the novices of her community, and offered her life for the rescue of souls and the growth of the Church. Died September 30, 1897

### Third Reading

### *The Autobiography of St. Thérèse*

Since my longing for martyrdom was powerful and unsettling, I turned to the letters of St. Paul in the hope of finally finding an answer. By chance, the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of the first letter to the Corinthians caught my attention, and in the first section I read that not everyone can be an Emissary, prophet, or teacher, that the Church is composed of a variety of members, and that eyes cannot be hands. Even with an answer like this revealed in front of me, I was not satisfied and did not find peace.

I persevered in reading and did not let my mind wander until I found this encouraging theme: “Fix your desires on the greater gifts; and I will now show you the way which is greater than all the rest.” You see, the Emissary insists that the greater gifts are nothing at all without love, and that this same love is certainly the best path leading directly to God. At last I had found peace of mind.

When I had contemplated the mystical body of the Church, I did not recognize myself in any of the parts St. Paul described, and what is more, I wanted to distinguish myself more favorably within the whole body. Love appeared to me to be the hinge for my vocation. I knew that in fact the Church had a body composed of various parts, and in this body the necessary and most noble member was not absent; I knew that the Church had a heart, and that this heart appeared to be on fire with love.

I knew that one love drove the parts of the Church to action, and that if this love were put out, the Emissaries would no longer have reported the Good News, and the martyrs would no longer have shed their blood. I saw and realized that love sets off the bounds of all vocations, that love is everything, and that this same love embraces every time and every place. In one word, love is eternal.

Then, nearly ecstatic with the supreme joy in my soul, I exclaimed, “My Jesus, my love, at last I have found my vocation! My vocation is love! Certainly I have found my proper place in the Church; and you gave me that very place, my God! In the heart of the Church, my mother, I will be love, and in this way I will be everything, as my desire finds its direction.”

From the very beginning, my God, you came to me with your love, which has grown since my childhood; I cannot fully grasp its depths.

Dear Master, how great is the goodness you have stored up for those who are in awe of you; I cannot fully grasp its depths.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you have promised your Kingdom to those who are willing to become like little children, please help us follow the way of St. Thérèse with confidence, so that by her prayers we will come to know your eternal glory. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy

Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

OCTOBER 2  
UARDIAN ANGELS

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Bernard*

“He has given his angels orders about you to guard you along all your paths. They should thank the Master for his mercy; his marvelous deeds are for mortal men.” They should express their gratitude and say among the nations that the Master has done marvels for them. Master, what is man that you have made yourself known to him, and why do you let your heart lean toward him? And you do let your heart lean toward him; you show him your care and concern. At the end, you sent him your only Son and the grace of your Spirit, and promise him a vision of your face. And so, for nothing in heaven to be missing in your concern for us, you send those blessed spirits to serve us, and assign them as our guardians and teachers.

“He has given his angels orders about you to guard you along all your paths.” These words should fill you with respect, inspire devotion, and instill confidence; respect for the presence of angels, devotion because of their loving service, and confidence because of their protection. And so the angels are here; they are at your side, and they are with you, present on your behalf. They are here to protect you and serve you. But even if it is God who has given these orders to them, we must still be grateful to them for the great love with which they obey and come to help us in our great need.

So let us be devoted and grateful to such great protectors; let us return their love and honor them as much as we can and should. Yet all our love and honor must go to God, since it is from him that they receive all that makes them worthy of our love and respect.

We should then, my brothers and sisters, show our affection for the angels, because one day they will be our coheirs, just as here below they are our guardians and trustees designated and set over us by the Father. We are God’s children, although it does not seem so, because we are still only small children under guardians and trustees, and for the present

little better than slaves.

Even though we are children and have a long—a very long and dangerous—way to go, with protectors like these, what do we have to be afraid of? Those who keep us in all of our paths cannot be overpowered or led astray, much less lead us astray. They are loyal, full of good judgment, and powerful. Then why are we afraid? We have only to follow them and stay close to them, and we will live under the protection of God's heaven.

God gave his angels orders about you to protect you along all your paths; they will lift you up in their hands to keep your feet from tripping over a stone.

No harm will come to do you damage, no epidemic will come near you; they will lift you up in their hands to keep your feet from tripping over a stone.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since in your loving providence you send your holy angels to watch over us, please listen to our prayers and always defend us by their protection and let us share your life with them forever. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## October FRANCIS OF ASSISI Monk

Born in Assisi in 1182. After a carefree youth, he renounced his paternal wealth and committed himself to evangelical poverty, and preached the love of God to everyone. He established a religious order and afterward an order of nuns and a society of laymen. Died in 1226.

*Third Reading*      *A Letter to all the Faithful by St. Francis of Assisi*

It was through his archangel St. Gabriel that the Father above made known to the holy, glorious Virgin Mary that the renowned, holy, and

glorious Word of the Father would come from heaven and take from her womb the real flesh of our human frailty. Though he was incalculably wealthy, he still willingly chose to be poor with his blessed mother. And shortly before his suffering, he celebrated the Passover with his students, and he prayed to his Father, "Father, if it is possible, have his cup taken away from me."

Still, he let his will rest in the will of the Father. The Father willed that his blessed and glorious Son, whom he gave to us and who was born for us, was through his own blood to offer himself as a sacrificial victim on the altar of the cross. This was not to be done for himself, through whom everything came into being, but for our sins; it was intended to leave us an example of how to follow in his footsteps. And he desires all of us to be saved through him, and to receive him with pure hearts and chaste bodies.

How happy and fortunate are the ones who love the Master and do as the Master himself said in the Good News: "You are to love your God the Master with your whole heart and your whole soul, and your neighbor as much as yourself." And so we should love God and adore him with a pure heart and mind; this is his particular desire when he says, "True worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth." That is, everyone who worships him must do so in the spirit of truth. So we should also direct our praises and prayers to him, and say, "Our Father in heaven," since we must always pray and never grow lazy.

In addition, let us produce a harvest that fits a change of attitude; let us love our neighbors as much as we love ourselves. Let us have charity and humility. Let us give to charity, because this scrubs our souls clean from the stains of sin. Men lose all the material things they leave behind them in this world, but they carry with them the reward of their love and the charity they give; it is for these they will receive from the Master the reward and payment that they deserve.

We must not be wise and exercise good judgment in a material sense; we must be simple, humble, and pure. We should never desire to be over others, but should be servants who are submissive to every human being for God's sake. The Spirit of the Master will rest on everyone who lives in this way and perseveres in it to the end. He will make his permanent home in them; they will be the Father's children, who do his work; they are the spouses, brothers, and mothers of our Master Prince Jesus.

It is a blessing for you to be poor, because you have God ruling over you as king; it is a blessing for people to be meek, because they will own the land.

It is a blessing for you to be hungry now, because you will be satisfied; it is blessing for people to be meek, because they will own the land.

**Prayer**

Dear Father, since you helped St. Francis reflect the image of the Prince through a life of poverty and humility, may we please follow your Son by walking in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi and imitating his joyful love. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

October 6  

**BRUNO**  
 Priest

Born in Cologne in 1035. He was educated in Paris, and after ordination, taught theology. But he longed for a solitary life and so founded the first Carthusian monastery. When called upon by Pope Urban II, he helped him meet the needs of the Church. Died in Squillace in Calabria in 1101.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter to his Carthusian Sons by St. Bruno*

From the frequent, pleasant reports of our very esteemed brother, I know of your reasoned and really praiseworthy training, carried out with unwavering rigor. Since I have heard of your holy love and constant pursuit of honesty and virtue, my spirit finds happiness in the Master. I am glad, and drawn to praise and gratitude to God, and still I long to love him. I am happy, as I should be, in the growing harvest of your strength, and yet I am saddened and ashamed that I am staying idle and senseless in the mire of my sins.

And so, be happy, brothers I love so much, because you have been so blessed, and because of the bountiful hand of God's grace upon you. Be happy that you have escaped the various dangers and shipwrecks of

the stormy world. Be happy that you have reached the quiet and safe anchorage of a secret harbor; many people wish to come into this port, and many make great efforts to do so and yet do not achieve it. In fact, many people after they do achieve it have been thrown out, because it was not bestowed on them from above.

And so, my brothers, you should consider it certain and well-founded that whoever shares in this welcome good will, if he loses it in any way, mourn to his death, if he has any regard or concern for the rescue of his soul.

My lay brothers I love so dearly, I say about you, "My soul is full of the Master's magnificence," because I have learned of the generosity of his mercy toward you from the report of your prior, the father you love so very dearly; he is very happy, and takes great pride in you. And we should be happy that, since you are unacquainted with the knowledge of letters, the omnipotent God will engrave with his finger in your hearts not only his love, but even the knowledge of his holy law. By your work, you show what you love and what you know; when you observe true obedience with good judgment and enthusiasm, it is clear that you wisely are picking the most pleasant-tasting and nourishing fruit of divine Scripture.

If I only had wings like a dove to fly far away to find my rest, I would escape to a far-off land and encamp in the wilderness.

The world with all its attractions will cease to exist, but anyone who does God's will will live on forever; I would escape to a far-off land and encamp in the wilderness.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you called St. Bruno to serve you in solitude, please help us in answer to his prayers to remain faithful to you amid the changes of this world. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also October 6  
 Bl. ARIE OSE UROCHER  
 Virgin

Born October 6, 1811 in St. Antoine, Quebec, Eulalie Durocher was her family's tenth child. She was educated in St. Denis and Montreal under the Sisters of Notre Dame, and for thirteen years assisted her brother, a parish priest, as a parish worker. She established the first Canadian parish Sodality for young women, and in 1843, founded the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, dedicated to Christian education, a community which flourished in spite of great poverty and misunderstandings. Died on October 6, 1849, and was declared blessed by Pope John Paul II on May 23, 1982.

*Fourth Reading*

*Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life  
 by the Second Vatican Council*

From the beginning of the Church, there have been men and women who have tried to follow the Prince with greater freedom, and to imitate him with closer fidelity through the practice of the evangelical councils. They have led lives dedicated to God, each in his or her own way. Many of them, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have lived in solitude or have founded religious communities, which the Church willingly recognized and approved by its authority.

As a result, in accordance with God's plan, there has grown up a wonderful variety of religious families. These have been of great service to the Church in equipping it "for every good work" and preparing it "for the work of the service of the construction of the Prince's Body," and also in adorning it with the different gifts of its children, so that the Church will appear in beauty "as a bride adorned for her husband, and reveal the many-faceted wisdom of God."

Surrounded by this rich profusion of gifts, all those who are called by God to the practice of the evangelical counsels and profess them with fidelity dedicate themselves to the Master in a special way. They follow the Prince, who in virginity and poverty redeemed and sanctified mankind through obedience, "even to death upon a cross."

Since they are driven in this way by the love that the Holy Spirit pours into their hearts, they live more and more for the Prince and for



## Also October 6: Bl. Marie Rose Durocher, Virgin

“his body, which is the Church.” The more fervent their union with the Prince through this gift of self throughout their lives, the richer is the life of the Church, and the more vigorous and fruitful its apostolate.

The members of each institute should remember above all that in professing the evangelical counsels, they have given their response to the call of God in such a way that they are to live for God alone, not only by dying to sin but also by renouncing the world. They have surrendered to his service the whole of their lives; this constitutes a special consecration, deeply rooted in the consecration of the Bath, to which it gives fuller expression.

Those who profess the evangelical counsels should look for and love above everything the God who has loved us first. In every circumstance of life, they should exert themselves to foster a life hidden with the Prince in God; this kind of life is a source of, and a stimulus to, the love of one’s neighbor for the rescue of the world and the construction of the Church. This love is the animating and guiding principle for the practice of the evangelical counsels.

Chastity for the kingdom of heaven, professed by religious, is to be valued as an outstanding gift of grace. In a unique way, it sets free man’s heart, so that it may be all the more on fire with love for God and for all mankind. It is therefore a special sign of the blessings of heaven, and a supremely fitting means by which religious dedicate themselves eagerly to the service of God and the works of the apostolate. In this way, they bring to the minds of all the faithful that wonderful marriage between the Church and the Prince, its only spouse: a marriage that has been established by God, and will be fully revealed in the world to come.

How beautiful you are, virgin of the Prince; the Master has given you the gift of perpetual virginity.




Nothing can rob you of your reward or separate you from the love of the Son of God; the Master has given you the gift of perpetual virginity.

### Prayer

Dear Master, since you kindled in the heart of blessed Marie Rose Durocher the flame of burning love and a great desire to collaborate as a teacher in the mission of the Church, please bestow on us that same

active love, so that in responding to the needs of the world today we will be able to lead our brothers and sisters to eternal life. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

October 7

 Our  dy of the  ROSARY

*This feast was established by St. Pius V on the anniversary of the naval victory at Lepanto, which was attributed to the help of the Mother of God because the people prayed the rosary.*

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Bernard*

The child to be born from you will be called holy, the Son of God, the wellspring of wisdom, the Word of the Father above. Through you, blessed Virgin, this Word will become flesh, so that even though, as he says, “I am in the Father and the Father is in me,” it is still true for him to say, “I came out of God and am here.”

“In the beginning, there was the Word.” The spring was gushing up, and yet was still inside himself. In fact, “the Word was face to face with God,” really living in inaccessible light. And the Master said from the beginning, “I think thoughts of peace and not trouble.” Yet your thought was locked inside you, and we did not know what it was you thought; who knew the Master’s mind, or who was his advisor?

And so the idea of peace came down to do the work of peace: “The Word became flesh,” and even now “has his home among us.” It is by faith that he has his home in our heart, memory, intellect, and even penetrates into our imagination. What concept could a man have of God if he did not first make an image of him in his heart? Since he is by nature incomprehensible and inaccessible, he was invisible and unthinkable; but now he wanted to be understood, seen, and thought of.

But how, you ask, was this done? He lay in a manger and rested on a virgin’s breast, preached on a mountain, and spent the night in prayer. He hung on a cross, grew pale in death, and roamed free among the dead and ruled over those in the world below. He came back to life again on the third day, and showed the Emissaries the wounds of the nails, the


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AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

signs of victory; and finally in their presence, he ascended to the sanctuary of heaven.

How can we not contemplate this story in truth, piety, and holiness? Whatever in all this I consider, it is God I am considering; in all this, he is my God. I have said that it is wise to meditate on these truths, and I have thought it right to recall the ample pleasantness given by the fruit from this priestly root; and Mary, drawing copiously from heaven, has caused this pleasantness to overflow for us.

Prayer

Dear Master, please fill our hearts with your love, and in the same way as you revealed the coming of your Son as man by an angel, please lead us through his suffering and death to the glory of his return to life, since he is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

OCTOBER 9  
ENIS, BISHOP AND MARTYR  
AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

St. Gregory of Tours relates that St. Denis came to France from Rome in the middle of the third century. He became the first bishop of Paris, and suffered martyrdom near that city with two members of his clergy.

*Third Reading*

*A Commentary on Psalm 118 by St. Ambrose*

Just as there are many kinds of persecution, there are many kinds of martyrdom. Every day you are a witness to the Prince. You were tempted by the spirit of fornication, but were afraid of the coming judgment of the Prince and did not want your purity of mind and body to be defiled; you are a martyr for the Prince. You were tempted by the spirit of greed to seize the property of a child and violate the rights of a defenseless widow, but remembered God's law and saw your duty to give help, not act unjustly; you are a witness to the Prince. The Prince wants witnesses like this to stand ready, as Scripture says, "Do justice to orphans and

defend widows.”

You were tempted by the spirit of pride, but saw the poor and needy, and looked with loving sympathy on them, and loved humility rather than arrogance; you are a witness to the Prince. What is more, your witness was not only in your words but in your actions.

Can anyone give greater testimony than someone who “acknowledges that Master Jesus has come in the flesh” and keeps the commandments of the Good News? A person who listens and does not act repudiates the Prince; even if he acknowledges him by his words, he repudiates him by his actions. There will be so many who say to the Prince, “Master, Master, did we not prophesy and drive away devils and work many miracles all in your name?” On that day, he will say to them, “Go away from me, all of you who have done evil.” A true witness is one who gives evidence of the commandments of Master Jesus and supports that evidence by his actions.

There are so many hidden martyrs, giving their evidence to the Prince every day and acknowledging Jesus as the Master. The Emissary knew this kind of martyrdom, this faithful testimony to the Prince: “This is what we are proud of,” he said, “the evidence of our conscience.” There are so very many who have given evidence in public, but repudiated it in private! “Do not believe every spirit,” he said, but know “from their results” the ones you should believe. Be faithful and courageous when you are persecuted inside yourself, so that you will win approval when you are persecuted publicly. Even in those unseen persecutions there are kings and governors, and judges with terrible power. You have an example in the temptation endured by the Master.

In another place, we read, “Do not let sin be king in your mortal body.” You see the kings before whom you are made to stand, those who sit in judgment over sinners, where sin is in control. There are as many kings as there are sins and vices; it is before these kings that we are led and before these we stand. These kings have their thrones in many hearts; but if anyone acknowledges the Prince, he topples him from the throne of his own heart. How can the devil maintain his throne in someone who builds a throne for the Prince in his heart?

These saints of God underwent a great struggle; after passing through fire and water, they were saved and received winners’ crowns of glory

from the Master, our God.

They sacrificed their lives to give evidence for God, and received winners' crowns of glory from the Master, our God.

Prayer

Dear Father, since you sent St. Denis and his companions to preach your glory to the nations and gave them the strength to be steadfast in their sufferings for the Prince, please bestow on us the ability to learn from their example to reject the power and wealth of this world and to brave all earthly troubles. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Lucca, Tuscany in 1541. He studied pharmacy, and then became a priest. He preached and taught, especially trying to instruct boys in Catholicism. In 1574, he founded the Order of Clerics Regular of the Mother of God, which caused him many hardships. He was also associated with the founding of the first society of priests dedicated to the foreign missions, which later became the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. He also restored discipline in different religious congregations. Died in Rome in 1609.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter to Pope Paul V by John Leonardi*

Those who want to work for moral reform in the world must look to the glory of God before everything else; because God is the source of everything good, they must wait for his help and pray for it in this difficult but necessary undertaking. They must present themselves to those they are trying to reform as mirrors of every virtue and lamps on a lampstand; their honest lives and noble conduct must shine before everyone in the house of God. In this way, they will gently lure the members of the Church to reform instead of forcing them—to prevent, in the words of the Council of Trent, their demanding of the body what

is not found in the head, and thus upsetting the order of the Master's household.

They will be like skilled physicians taking great pains to dispose of all the diseases that plague the Church and need curing. They will prepare themselves to provide suitable remedies for each illness.

As far as remedies applicable to the whole Church are concerned, reform must begin with high and low alike, with superiors and inferiors; yet the reformers must look first to those who are in charge of the rest, so that reform can begin at the point from which it can spread to the others.

Be especially concerned with cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and priests, whose particular duty is the care of souls, and make them men to whom the guidance of the Master's flock can safely be entrusted. So we should work down from the highest to the lowest, from superiors to inferiors. Those men who must initiate ecclesiastical reform must not be looked down upon.

Nothing should be left untried that can train children from early childhood in good morals and the earnest practice of Christianity. For this purpose, nothing is more effective than pious instructions in Christian teaching; children should be entrusted only to good and God-fearing teachers.

These are the thoughts, holy Father, that the Master has chosen to inspire in me for the present on this supremely important matter. If at first glance they appear difficult, compare them with the magnitude of the situation; then they will seem very easy indeed. Great works are accomplished only by great men, and great men should be involved in great works.

This holy man accomplished everything God asked of him; and God has said to him, "Of all the peoples of this world, you are the only one I have found virtuous in my sight. Enter my resting place."

He renounced earthly joys, and so gained the Kingdom of Heaven. "Of all the peoples of this world, you are the only one I have found virtuous in my sight. Enter my resting place."

#### Prayer

Dear Father, giver of everything good, since you announced the Good

News to countless people through the service of St. John Leonardi, may the true faith by the help of his prayers continue to grow. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

OCTOBER 14  
**CALLISTUS I**  
POPE, MARTYR

Reputedly a former slave, he was ordained a deacon by Pope Sephyrinus and succeeded him as Pope. He fought against the Adoption and Modalist heretics, and was martyred in 222 and buried in the Aurelian Way.

*Third Reading*

*A Treatise to Fortunatus by St. Cyprian*

“The sufferings of the present time are nothing in comparison with the glory that is to be revealed in us.” Is there anyone who would not exert all his effort to attain this glory, to become a friend of God, and be immediately happy with the Prince and receive the rewards of heaven after earth’s torment and suffering? Soldiers of this world take pride in returning to their home country in triumph after defeating the enemy; how much greater is the glory in returning triumphantly to heaven after conquering the devil! The presumptuous fraud has been knocked out, and the trophies of victory are restored to the place from which Adam was expelled for his sin.

We offer the Master a supremely acceptable gift, our incorrupt faith, the unshaken courage of our spirit, and the glorious pride of our dedication. We are with him when he comes to take vengeance on his enemies; we are sitting at his side on the judge’s bench; since we share the Prince’s inheritance, we are on an equal footing with the angels and enjoy the possession of a heavenly Kingdom along with the patriarchs, Emissaries, and prophets. What persecution can defeat thoughts like these, and what torture can swamp them?

The spirit of a strong, stable character strengthened is what lasts; this unshaken spirit, which finds its strength in a certain, solid faith in the

future, will have life against all the terrors of the devil and threats of this world. During persecution, the earth is closed off from us, but heaven is standing open; the Antichrist threatens, but the Prince protects us; death is introduced, but eternal life follows it. What an honor, what happiness it is to leave this world with joy, to go away in glory from the anguish and pain, in one moment to close one's eyes that looked on the world of men and in the next to open them at once to look on God and the Prince! The speed of this rapturous leave-taking! You are suddenly pulled away from earth to find yourself in the Kingdom of Heaven!

These are thoughts you must grasp with your hearts and minds and reflect on day and night. If persecution should catch up with this kind of soldier of God, it will not win out over a person so virtuously prepared for battle. Even if our summons comes sooner, our faith which was prepared for the testimony of martyrdom will not go unrewarded; because we would immediately receive our reward by God's judgment. In time of persecution, the battle wins the laurel crown, but in peace, it is the testimony of a good conscience.

You must have at heart every member of the flock, because the Holy Spirit has made you their shepherds. You must rule over the Church of God, which he made his own by the blood of his Son.

The great quality of a steward is to be faithful to his duty. You must rule over the Church of God, which he made his own by the blood of his Son.

#### Prayer

Dear God of mercy, please listen to the prayers of your people for us to be helped by St. Callistus, whose martyrdom we celebrate with joy. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



October 15: TERESA OF ÁVILA, VIRGIN, DOCTOR 29



Born in Avila, Spain in 1515. She joined the Carmelites, made great progress in the way of perfection, and enjoyed mystical revelations. When she reformed the Order, she met with a good deal of resistance, but succeeded with undaunted courage. She also wrote books based on her own spiritual life. Died in Ávila in 1582

*Third Reading*

*A Work by St. Teresa of Avila*

If Jesus the Prince lives in a man as his friend and noble leader, that man can endure everything, because the Prince helps and strengthens us and never abandons us. He is a true friend. And I clearly see that if we expect to please him and receive a profusion of his graces, God wants those graces to come to us from the hands of the Prince, through his supremely sacred humanity, in which God takes his pleasure.

Many, many times I have perceived this by experience. The Master has told it to me. I have definitely seen that we must enter by this gate if we wish his Sovereign Majesty to reveal to us his great, hidden mysteries. A person should desire no other path, even if he is at the summit of contemplation; on this road he walks safely. All our blessings come to us through our Master; he will teach us, because in looking on this life, we find that he is the best example.

What more do we want from such a good friend at our side? Unlike our friends in the world, he will never abandon us when we are in trouble or suffering. It is a blessing for a person to love him truly and always keep him near. Let us consider glorious St. Paul: it seems that no other name fell from his lips than that of Jesus, because the name of Jesus was fixed and embedded in his heart. Once I had come to understand this truth, I carefully considered the lives of some of the saints, the great contemplatives, and found that they took no other paths: Francis, Anthony of Padua, Bernard, Catherine of Siena. A person must walk along this path in freedom, placing himself in God's hands; if God should desire to raise us to the position of one who is an intimate and shares his secrets, we ought to accept this gladly.

Whenever we think of the Prince, we should recall the love that led

him to bestow on us so many graces and favors, and also the great love God showed in giving us in the Prince a pledge of his love; because love calls for love in return. We should make an effort to keep this always before our eyes and to incite ourselves to love him; because if at some time the Master were to grant us the grace of impressing his love on our hearts, everything will become easy for us and we will accomplish great things quickly and without effort.

Those who turn their backs on you will die off. What a joy to be near my God, to place all my trust in the Master!

Whoever is united to the Master becomes one spirit with him. What a joy to be near my God, to place all my trust in the Master!

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since by your Spirit you brought St. Teresa of Avila forward to show your Church the way to perfection, may her inspired teaching awaken in us a longing for true holiness. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

### October 16 Hedwig Religious

Born in Bavaria ca. 1174. She married a prince of Silesia and had seven children, leading a devoted life, looking after the poor and sick, and founding hospitals for them. When her husband died, she entered the monastery of Trebnitz and died there in 1243.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *The Life of St. Hedwig by a contemporary*

Hedwig knew that the living stones that were to be placed in the building of the heavenly Jerusalem had to be smoothed out by poundings and pressures in this world, and that a great many troubles would be needed before she could cross over into the glory of her heavenly homeland. So she exposed herself completely to the water of suffering, and continually exhausted her body with rigorous punishment; because of these great daily fasts and abstinences, she grew so thin that many

people wondered how a feeble, delicate woman could endure the torture.

She punished herself with continual mortification of the body, but she did so with prudent discretion. The more attentively she kept vigils, the more she grew in the strength of the spirit and in grace, and the more the fire of devotion and divine love blazed inside her. She was often carried aloft with such burning desire and impelled toward God that she would no longer be aware of what was around her.

Just as her devotion always made her search after God, her generous piety turned her toward her neighbors, and she bestowed plentiful gifts of charity to the needy. She gave assistance to colleges and religious persons living inside or outside monasteries, to widows and orphans, to the weak and feeble, to lepers, to those in chains and prison, to travelers, and to destitute women nursing infants. She allowed no one who came to her for help to go away without comfort.

And because this servant of God never neglected the practice of all sorts of good works, God also bestowed on her such grace that when she did not have the human means to do good, and when her own powers failed, the divine power of the sufferings of the Prince gave her strength to respond to the needs of her neighbors. And so, through divine favor, she had the power to relieve the bodily and spiritual troubles of everyone who looked to her for help.

She set herself to work with courage; she put out all her strength; therefore, her lamp will never go out.

She has discovered how good it is to work for the God of wisdom; therefore, her lamp will never go out.

#### Prayer

Omnipotent God, may the prayers of St. Hedwig please bring us your help, and may her life of remarkable humility be an example to all of us. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also October 16


**MARGARET**

**MARY**

**ALACOQUE**  
 Virgin

Born in 1647 in the diocese of Autun, France. She joined the Sisters of the Visitation in Paray-le-Monial, where she advanced in the life of perfection and was favored with mystical revelations, especially of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, devotion to which she was responsible for spreading. Died October 17, 1690.

*Third Reading**A Letter by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque*

It seems to me that our Master's earnest desire to have his sacred heart honored in a special way is directed at renewing the effects of redemption in our souls; because the sacred heart is an inexhaustible spring and its sole desire is to pour itself out into the hearts of the humble so as to free them and prepare them to lead lives in accordance with his good pleasure.

From this divine heart, three streams flow endlessly. The first is the stream of mercy for sinners; it pours into their hearts feelings of contrition and repentance. The second is the stream of love which helps everyone in need, and especially assists those working for perfection to find the means of surmounting their difficulties. From the third stream flow love and light for the benefit of his friends who have attained perfection; these are the ones he wishes to unite to himself so that they can share his knowledge and commandments and in their individual ways devote themselves wholly to advancing his glory.

This divine heart is an abyss of all blessings, and into it the poor should submerge all their needs. It is an abyss of joy in which all of us can drown our sorrows; it is an abyss of humility to counteract our foolishness, and abyss of mercy for the miserable, and abyss of love to meet our every need.

And so you must unite yourselves to the heart of our Master Prince Jesus, both at the beginning of your conversion, so that you can obtain the proper dispositions, and at its end to make reparation. Are you making no progress in prayer? Then you need only offer God the praying which the Savior has poured out for us in the sacrament of the altar. Offer God his fervent love in reparation for your laziness. In the course

## October 17: Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop, ~~M~~ARTYR

of every activity, pray in this way: “My God, I am doing this or I am enduring that in the heart of your Son and in accordance with his holy guidance. I offer it to you in reparation for anything blameworthy or imperfect in my actions.” Continue to do this in every circumstance of life; and every time that some punishment, suffering, or injustice comes your way, say to yourself, “Accept this as sent to you by the Sacred Heart of Prince Jesus so that you can unite yourself to him.”

But above all, preserve peace of heart. This is more valuable than any treasure. In order to preserve it, there is nothing more useful than renouncing your own will and substituting for it the will of the divine heart; in this way, his will can carry out for us whatever contributes to his glory, and we will be happy to be his subjects and to trust entirely to him.

I thank you, Father, Master of heaven and earth, for hiding all this from the learned and clever and revealing it to little children. Yes, Father, this is what you have willed.

The God of my heart is my share forever. Yes, Father, this is what you have willed.

### Prayer

Dear Master, please pour out on us the riches of the Spirit which you bestowed on St. Margaret Mary, and may we come to know the love of the Prince which surpasses all human understanding and be filled with the fullness of God. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



St. Ignatius was a successor of St. Peter as bishop of Antioch. He was condemned to death by being thrown to wild animals, and was brought to Rome for execution and martyred under Emperor Trajan in 107. On

the journey to Rome, he wrote letters to seven different communities, in which he discussed the Prince, the structure of the Church, and the Christian life in a way that was wise and educated.

*Third Reading      A Letter to the Romans by St. Ignatius of Antioch*

I am writing to all the communities to let it be known that I will gladly die for God if only you do not stand in my way. I beg you not to show me any inopportune kindness; let me be food for the wild animals, because they are my way to God. I am God's wheat and will be ground by their teeth so that I can become the Prince's pure bread. Pray to the Prince for me to have the animals be the means of making me a sacrificial victim for God.

No earthly pleasures, or kingdoms of this world, can benefit me in any way; I would rather have death in Prince Jesus than power over the farthest limits of the earth. The one who died in place of us is the one object of my search; the one who came back to life for our sake is my one desire.

The time for my birth is very near me. Forgive me, my brothers and sisters, and do not stand in the way of my birth to real life; do not wish me to be stillborn. My desire is to belong to God; then do not hand me back to the world; do not try to tempt me with material things; let me reach pure light. Only on my arrival there can I fully be a human being. Give me the privilege of imitating the suffering of my God; if you have him in your heart, you will understand what I want. You will sympathize with me because you will know what drives me forward.

The ruler of this world is determined to lay hands on me and undermine my will, which is intent on God. None of you should be helping him; show yourselves on my side, which is also God's side. Do not talk about Prince Jesus as long as you love this world; do not harbor envious thoughts.

And supposing I see you, if I beg you then to intervene on my behalf, do not believe what I will be saying; believe what I am writing to you now instead; because, even though I am alive as I write to you, my real desire is to die. My love of this life has been crucified, and there is no yearning in me for any earthly thing; no, inside me there is the living water which says deep within me, "Come to the Father." I no longer take pleasure in perishable food or the pleasures of this world; I want only God's bread, which is the meat of the body of Prince Jesus, who

## October 17: Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop, ~~MARC~~ 335

was formed from the seed of David; and for drink I crave his blood, which is love that cannot die.

I am no longer willing to live a merely human life, and you can bring about my wish if you would. Please, then, do me this favor, so that you in your turn will meet with equal kindness. Put briefly, this is my request: believe what I am saying to you. Prince Jesus himself will make it clear to you that I am telling the truth; only truth can come from that mouth by which the Father has truly spoken. Please pray for me to obtain my desire; I have not written to you as a mere man would, but as one who knows the mind of God. If I am condemned to suffer, I will take it that you wish me well; if my case is postponed, I can only think that you wish me harm.

Nothing will be hidden from you if you have perfect faith and love for Prince Jesus, since these are the beginning and end of life. Actually, faith is the beginning and love is the end.

Dress yourselves in gentleness and be renewed in faith, which is the meat of the Master's body, and in love, which is the blood of Prince Jesus. Actually, faith is the beginning and love is the end.

### Prayer

Omnipotent, eternally living God, since you ennoble your Church with the heroic testimony of everyone who gave their lives for the Prince, please grant the favor that the victory of St. Ignatius of Antioch will bring us your constant help in the same way as it brought him eternal glory. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



*Third Reading      A Homily on the Good news by St. Gregory the Great*

My dear brothers, our Master and Savior sometimes gives us instruction by words, and sometimes by actions. His very deeds are our commands; and whenever he acts silently, he is teaching us what we should do. For example, he sends his students out to report the Good News two by two, because the rule of love is twofold: love of God and of one's neighbors.

The Master sends his students out to make the report in twos in order to teach us silently that whoever fails in love towards his neighbors should in no way take upon himself the occupation of reporting the Good News.

It is appropriately said that he sent them ahead of him into every city and place where he himself was to go; because the Master follows the preachers, because preaching goes ahead to prepare the way, and when the words of encouragement have gone ahead and established truth in our minds, the Master comes to live within us.

Isaiah says to those who are announcing the News, "Prepare the road for the Master; make our God's paths straight." And the psalmist tells them, "Make a path for the one who rises above the sunset." The Master rises above the sunset because from that very place where he slept in death, he rose again and revealed a greater glory. He rises above the sunset because in his return to life he trampled underfoot the death which he endured; and so, we make a path "for the one who rises above the sunset" when we preach his glory to you, so that when he himself follows us, he will illuminate you with his love.

Let us now listen to his words as he sends his reporters out: "The harvest is a large one, but there are not many workers; and so pray to the Master of the harvest to send workers into his harvest." That the harvest is good but there are few workers cannot be said without a heavy heart, because although there are a great many to listen to the Good News,



there are only a few to report it. See, in fact, how full the world is of priests; and yet in God's harvest a true worker is rarely to be found; though we have accepted the priestly profession, we do not fulfill its demands.

Think over, my dear brothers, think over his words: "Pray to the Master of the harvest to send workers into his harvest." Pray for us to be able to work suitably on your behalf, for our tongue not to grow tired of encouraging you onward, and for us not to bring condemnation on ourselves from the just judge by our silence after taking up the profession of reporting the Good News.

He carefully traced the whole story from the beginning and wrote his report of the Good News so that we would understand the truth of the teaching we had received.

He gave us a record about all that Jesus did and taught so that we would understand the truth of the teaching we had received.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you chose the evangelist Luke to reveal by reporting and writing the mystery of your love for the poor, please unite in heart and spirit everyone who takes pride in your name, and have every nation come to see your rescue. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
 we humbly call you Master.  
 The whole world honors you  
 as its eternal Father.  
 all the angels too,  
 the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
 the cherubim and seraphim  
 cry out in chorus,  
 "Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
 Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!"  
 The glorious college of Apostles,

the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin's womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

October 19  
ISAAC JOGUES  
AND John de Brebeuf,  
PRIESTS, MARTYRS,  
AND COMPANIONS  
MARTYRS

Between 1642 and 1649, eight members of the Society of Jesus were killed in North America, after fearful torture by members of the Huron and Iroquois tribes. These men had worked hard to bring the natives of that region to the true faith. St. Isaac Jogues died on October 18, 1647, and St. John de Brebeuf on March 16, 1648.

*Third Reading*

*The Spiritual Diaries by St. John de Brebeuf*

For two days now I have experienced a great desire to be a martyr and to endure all the torments the martyrs suffered.

Jesus, my Master and Savior, what can I give you in return for all the favors you have first conferred on me? I “will take” from your hand “the cup” of your sufferings and “call on your name.” I vow before your eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, before your supremely holy Mother and her supremely chaste husband, before the angels, Emissaries, and martyrs, before my blessed fathers St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier—in reality, I vow to you, Jesus, my Savior, that as far as I have the strength, I will never fail to accept the grace of martyrdom, if some day in your infinite wisdom you offer it to me, your supremely undeserving slave.

I bind myself in this way so that for the rest of my life I will have neither permission nor freedom to refuse opportunities of dying and shedding my blood for you, unless on a particular occasion I consider it more suitable for your glory to act otherwise at that time. Further, I bind myself to this so that, on receiving the death blow, I will accept it from your hands with the fullest delight and joy of spirit. For this reason, my beloved Jesus, and because of the surging joy which moves me, here and now I offer my blood and body and life. May I die only for you, if you will grant me this grace, since you were willing to die for me. Let me live

in such a way that you will grant me the gift of such a happy death; in this way, my God and Savior, “I will take” from your hand “the cup” of your sufferings and “call upon your name”: Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!

My God, it gives me great sorrow that you are not known, that in this savage wilderness everyone has not been converted to you, and that sin has not been driven from it. My God, even if all the brutal tortures which prisoners in this region must endure should fall on me, I offer myself perfectly willingly to them and I alone will suffer them all.

Through faith the saints conquered kingdoms and did what was virtuous; they secured promises and were strong in battle. All of them have won approval for their testimony to the faith.

God tested them and found them worthy of himself; all of them have won approval for their testimony to the faith.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you consecrated the first beginnings of the faith in North America by the preaching and martyrdom of Sts. John and Isaac and their companions, may the Christian faith continue to grow by the help of their prayers throughout the world. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

October 20:  
 Paul of the Cross  
 PRIEST

Born in Ovada, Liguria in 1694. As a young man he helped his father, who was a merchant. But he aspired to a life of perfection, and brought together a group of associates who joined him in caring for the poor and sick. After he became a priest, he worked for the salvation of souls by founding homes, exercising apostolic zeal, and punishing himself with harsh penances. Died in Rome on October 18, 1775.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by St. Paul of the Cross*

It is a very good, holy thing to consider the suffering of our Master and meditate on it, because by this sacred path we reach union with God. In this supremely holy school, we learn true wisdom, because it was there that all the saints learned it. In fact, when the cross of our beloved Jesus has planted its roots more deeply into your hearts, then you will feel joy “to suffer and not to die,” or “either to suffer or to die,” or better, “neither to suffer nor die, but only to turn perfectly to the will of God.”

Love is a unifying virtue which takes upon itself the torments of the beloved Master; it is a fire reaching through to the inmost soul. It transforms the lover into the one loved; more deeply, love blends with grief and grief with love, and a certain merging of love and grief occurs. They become so united that we can no longer distinguish love from grief or grief from love. Thus, the loving heart finds its joy in sorrow and is euphoric over its grieving love.

And so, be constant in practicing every virtue, and especially in imitating the perseverance of our dear Jesus, because this is the summit of pure love. Live in such a way that everyone can know that you carry outwardly as well as inwardly the image of the Prince crucified, the model of all gentleness and mercy; because if a man is united inwardly with the Son of the living God, he also carries his image outwardly by his continual practice of heroic goodness, and especially by a patience bolstered by courage, which does not complain either secretly or in public. Conceal yourselves in Jesus crucified, and hope for nothing except that everyone will be thoroughly converted to his will.

When you become true lovers of the Crucified, you will always celebrate the feast of the cross in the inner temple of the soul, and bear everything in silence without relying on any creature. Since festivals ought to be celebrated joyfully, those who love the Crucified should honor the feast of the cross by enduring things in silence with a serene and joyful face, so that their suffering stays hidden from others and is observed by God alone; because in this feast, there is always a solemn banquet, and the food served is the will of God, exemplified by the love of our crucified Prince.

God forbid that I should take pride in anything except the cross of our Master Prince Jesus, through whom the world has been crucified to me

and I to the world.

I will find my pleasure in the Master; I will leap for joy in God, my Savior, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

*Prayer*

Dear Father, since you gave your priest St. Paul a special love for the Prince's cross, may his example inspire us to embrace our own cross with courage. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Capistrano, Abruzzi in 1386. He studied law in Perugia and served as governor of that city. He entered the Franciscans, and after ordination, preached throughout Europe both to strengthen Christian life and refute heresy. Died in Villach, Austria in 1456.

*Third Reading      The Mirror of the Clergy by St. John of Capistrano*

Those who are called to the Master's table must glow with the brightness that comes from the good example of a praiseworthy, blameless life; they must completely remove from their lives the filth and uncleanness of vice. Their honest lives must make them like the earth's salt for themselves and the rest of mankind; the brightness of their wisdom must make them like the light of the world that brings light to others. They must learn from their eminent teacher, Prince Jesus, what he stated not only to his Emissaries and students, but to all the priests and clerics who were to succeed them, when he said, "You are the earth's salt; but if salt becomes rotten, how can it be salted? It is good for nothing then but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot."

In reality, an unclean, immoral cleric is trampled underfoot like worthless manure; he is saturated with the filth of vice and entangled in the chains of sin. In this condition, he must be considered worthless both to himself and others. As Gregory says, "When a man's life is

frowned upon, it follows that his preaching will be despised.”

“Elders who are born leaders deserve to be doubly honored, especially those who work at preaching and teaching.” It is in fact a double task that deserving priests perform; that is to say, it is both exterior and interior, both temporal and spiritual, and finally, both a passing task and an eternal one.

Even though they live on earth and are bound by the same necessities of nature along with all mortal creatures, at the same time they are earnest communication with the angels in heaven, so that they will be pleasing to their king and learn how to serve him. And so, just as the sun rises over the world in God’s heaven, clerics “must let their light shine before others so that they will see their good deeds and give praise to their heavenly Father.”

“You are the light of the world.” Now a light does not illuminate itself; it diffuses its rays and shines all around upon everything that comes into its view. It must be this way with the glowing lives of honest, holy clerics. By the brightness of their holiness, they must bring light and serenity to everyone who gazes on them. They have been placed here to care for others; their own lives should be an example to others, showing how they must live in the Master’s house.

Speak out at the right time, and do not hide your wisdom, because speech makes wisdom known, and all a man has learned appears in his words.

Report the message, persevere in the task, both at the right time and the wrong times; correct, reprimand, summon to obedience—but do everything with patience and healthy teaching, because speech makes wisdom known, and all a man has learned appears in his words.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you brought St. John of Capistrano forward to give your people comfort in their troubles, may your Church enjoy unending peace and be secure in your protection. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

October 24


 ANTHONY  CLARET  
Bishop

Born in Sallent, Spain, in 1807. After ordination, he traveled many years through Catalonia preaching. He founded a society of missionaries and after being named bishop in Cuba, he won renown for his pastoral zeal. After returning to Spain, he continued working for the Church. Died in Fontfroide, France, in 1870.

*Third Reading**A Work by St. Anthony Mary Claret*

Since they were driven by the Holy Spirit, the holy Emissaries traveled through the earth, and by being inflamed with the same fire, apostolic missionaries have reached, and are now reaching, and will continue to reach the ends of the earth, from one pole to the other, to deliver the message about God. They are appropriately able to apply to themselves these words of the Emissary Paul: “The love of the Prince drives us on.”

The love of the Prince arouses us, urges us to run and fly, as we are lifted on the wings of holy zeal. A person who really loves God also loves his neighbor; a really zealous man is also one who loves, but he stands on a higher plane of love, so that the more he is inflamed by love, the more insistently zeal drives him on. But if anyone does not have this zeal, then it is evident that love and charity have been extinguished in his heart. A zealous man desires and achieves everything, and he works hard to make God better known, loved, and served in this world and the life to come, because this holy love is without end.

Because he is also concerned for his neighbors, a man of zeal works to fulfill his desire to have everyone be content on this earth and happy and blissful in their heavenly homeland, to have everyone saved, and to have no one be ruined forever or offend God, or remain even for a moment in sin. These are the concerns we observe in the holy Emissaries and in everyone driven by the apostolic spirit.

For myself, I say this to you: A man who burns with the fire of divine love is a son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary; and wherever he goes, he enkindles that flame; he desires and works with all his strength to inflame everyone with the fire of God’s love. Nothing deters him; he is happy in



## OCTOBER 28: ΣΙΜΩΝ ΑΝΘ JΥΔΕ, ΕΜΙΣΣΑΡΙΕΣ 345

poverty, he takes on hard labor, he welcomes hardships, he laughs off false accusations, and finds pleasure in anguish. He thinks only of how he can follow Prince Jesus and imitate him by his prayers, work, suffering, and by caring always and only for the glory of God and the rescue of souls.

I have longed to give you the Good News; and more than that, to give you my very life; you have become that dear to me.

My little children, I am like a mother giving birth to you until the Prince takes shape in you; you have become that dear to me.

### Prayer

Dear Father, since you endowed Anthony Claret with the strength of love and patience to report the Good News to many nations, by the help of his prayers may we work generously for your Kingdom and gain brothers and sisters for the Prince. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



### *Third Reading      A Commentary on John by St. Cyril of Alexandria*

Our Master Prince Jesus has designated certain men to be guides and teachers of the world and managers of his divine mysteries. Now he tells them to shine out like lamps and throw their light not only over the land of the Judeans, but every country under the sun, and over people scattered in all directions and settled in distant lands.

The man who said this was right: “No one takes an honor on himself; it is for one called by God,” because it was our Master Prince Jesus who called his own students before everyone else to a glorious apostolate. These holy men became the “pillar and mainstay of the truth,” and Jesus said that he was sending them in the same way as his father sent him.

By these words, he was making clear the dignity of the apostolate and the incomparable glory of the power given to them; but he is also, it would seem, giving them a hint about the methods they are to adopt in their apostolic mission—because if the Prince thought it necessary to send out his intimate students in this way, just as the Father had sent him, then surely it was necessary for those whose mission it was to be patterned on that of Jesus to see exactly why the Father had sent the Son. And so the Prince interpreted the character of his mission to us in a variety of ways. Once, he said, “I have not come to call the virtuous; I came to call sinners to change heart.” And then at another time, he said, “I have come down from heaven to do the will of the one who sent me, not my own will; because God did not send his Son into the world for him to condemn the world, but for the world to be rescued through him.”

And so, in asserting that they are sent by him in the same way he was sent by the Father, the Prince sums up in a few words the approach they are themselves to take to their service. From what he said, they would gather that it was their vocation to call sinners to change heart, to heal those who were sick in body or spirit, to try in all their dealings never to do their own will but the will of the one who sent them, and as far as possible to save the world by their teaching.

Surely it is in all these respects that we find his holy students making a strong effort to excel. To ascertain this involves no great effort; a single reading of the Acts of the Emissaries or of St. Paul’s writings is enough.

You did not choose me; I choose you to go out and bear fruit that will last forever.

My Father’s reputation is established when you bear a great deal of fruit that will last forever.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you revealed yourself to us through the preaching of your Emissaries Simon and Jude, please give your Church by their prayers continued growth and increase the number of those who believe in you. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.

I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Bernard*

Why should our praise and honoring, or even the celebration of this feast day, mean anything to the saints? What do they care about earthly honors when their heavenly Father honors them by fulfilling the faithful promise of the Son? What does our commendation mean to them? The saints have no need of honor from us; and our devotion does not add the slightest thing to what is theirs. Clearly, if we respect their memory, it serves us, not them; and I tell you, when I think of them, I feel myself on fire with a tremendous yearning.

Calling all the saints to mind inspires—or rather, arouses—in us, above everything else, a longing to enjoy their company, which is so desirable in itself. We long to share in the citizenship of heaven, to live with the spirits of those who were blessed, and to join the congregation of the patriarchs, the ranks of the prophets, the council of Emissaries, the great army of martyrs, the noble band of confessors, and the choir of virgins. In short, we long to be united in happiness with all the saints.

But our dispositions change. The Church of all the first followers of the Prince is waiting for us, but we do nothing about it. The saints want us to be with them, and we are indifferent. The souls of the virtuous are waiting for us and we ignore them.

Come, brothers and sisters, let us finally spur ourselves on. We must come back to life again with the Prince; we must look for the world which is above and set our minds on what is in heaven. Let us long for those who are longing for us, hurry to those who are waiting for us, and ask those who are looking for our coming to intercede for us. We should not only want to be with the saints, we should also hope to possess their happiness. While we desire to be in their company, we must also seriously

exert ourselves to share in their glory. Do not imagine that there is anything harmful in an ambition like this; there is no danger setting our hearts on glory.

When we commemorate the saints, we are set on fire with another yearning: that the Prince, our life, will also appear to us as he appeared to them, and that we will one day share in his glory. Until then, we do not see him as he is, but as he became for our sake. He is our head, crowned with the thorns of sins, not with glory. As parts of the body belonging to that head which is crowned with thorns, we should be ashamed to live in luxury; his purple robes are a mockery rather than an honor. When the Prince comes again, his death will no longer be proclaimed, and we will know that we have also died, that our life is hidden with him. The glorious head of the Church will appear, and the glorified parts of his body will shine in splendor with him, when he forms this miserable body into the kind of glory that belongs to himself as its head.

And so we should aim at reaching this glory with a wholehearted and reasonable desire. For us to hope appropriately and work for this blessedness, we must above all ask for the prayers of the saints. Thus, what is beyond our own powers to obtain will be granted through their intercession.

Praise God, all of you who are serving him, great and small, because the Master God, the Ruler of All, has begun his reign.

Sing for joy, God's chosen; let all the saints give him fitting praise, because the Master God, the Ruler of All, has begun his reign.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, omnipotent, eternally living God, since today we are celebrating the holy men and women of every time and place, may their prayers bring us your forgiveness and love. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;

we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
The glorious college of Apostles,  
the venerable guild of Prophets,  
the white-robed army of Martyrs chant their praise to you;  
the holy Church throughout the world acclaim you  
as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.  
I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.

*Third Reading**A Book on the Death of his Brother Satyrus  
by St. Ambrose*

We see that death is what is a gain, and life is the loss. Paul says, “For me, to live is the Prince, and to die is a benefit.” What does “the Prince” mean but to die in the body, and receive the breath of life? And so we should die with the Prince, to live with the Prince. We should have a daily familiarity with death, a daily desire for death. By this kind of detachment, our souls must learn to free themselves from the desires of the body; they must soar above earthly passions to a place where these passions cannot come near, and hold fast to it. The law of our fallen nature is at war with the law of our reason and subjects the law of reason to the law of error. What is the remedy? “Who will set me free from this dead body? The grace of God, through our Master Prince Jesus.”

Since we have a doctor to heal us, let us use the remedy he prescribes. The remedy is the grace of the Prince, the dead body is our own; and so let us be exiles from our bodies, so as not to be exiles from the Prince. Though we are still in the body, we should not give ourselves over to what belongs to the body. We must not reject the natural rights of the body, but we must desire before anything else the gifts of grace.

What more need be said? It was by the death of one man that the world was redeemed. The Prince did not need to die if he did not want to; but he did not look on death as something to be despised, something to be avoided, and he could have found no better means to save us than by dying. Thus, his death is life for everyone. We are sealed with the sign of his death; when we pray, we report his death; when we offer sacrifice, we are proclaiming his death. His death is victory; his death is a sacred sign; each year, his death is celebrated with solemnity by the whole world.

What more should we say about his death, since we use this divine example to prove that it was death alone that won freedom from death, and death was its own redeemer? Death is then no cause for grief, because it is the cause of mankind’s rescue. Death is not something to be

avoided, because the Son of God did not think it beneath his dignity, and did not try to escape it.

Death was not part of nature; it became part of nature. God did not decree death from the beginning; he prescribed it as a remedy. Human life was condemned because of sin to unremitting drudgery and unbearable suffering, and so began to experience the burden of misery. There had to be a limit to its evils; death had to restore what life had forfeited. Without the assistance of grace, immortality is more of a curse than a blessing.

The soul has to turn away from the aimless paths of this life and from the defilement of an earthly body; it must reach out to those assemblies in heaven (though it is given only to the saints to be admitted to them) to sing the praises of God. We learn from Scripture how God's praise is to be sung to the music of a harp: "Your actions are great and wondrous, Master, Omnipotent God; your ways are just and true, King of the Nations. Who will not respect and glorify your nature? You are the only holy one; every nation will come and worship before you." The soul must also desire to see your wedding, Jesus, and to view your bride as she is escorted from earthly to heavenly realities, as everyone celebrates and sings, "Everything material will come before you." No longer will the bride be held in subjection to this world that will end; it will be made one thing with the Spirit.

Above everything else, holy David prayed to see and gaze on this: "I have asked one thing from the Master, and this is what I am looking for: to live in the Master's house all the days of my life, and to see how congenial is the Master."

There are some who have died a godly death; they will receive the splendid reward which is waiting for them.

Then the virtuous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father; they will receive the splendid reward which is waiting for them.

#### Prayer

Merciful Father, please listen to our prayers and console us, and as we renew our faith in your Son whom you brought back to life from death, please strengthen our hope that all the brothers and sisters who have left us will share in the return to life of the one who is alive and reigning with



## NOVEMBER 3: MARTIN DE PORRES, Religious 353

you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Lima, Peru of a Spanish father and a black mother in 1579. As a boy, he studied medicine, which later, as a Dominican, he put to good use in helping the poor. He led a humble and disciplined life and was devoted to the Holy Eucharist. Died in 1639.

### *Third Reading*

### *A Homily at the Canonization of St. Martin by Pope John XXIII*

The example of Martin's life is ample evidence that we can work hard for holiness and our rescue as Prince Jesus has shown us: first, by loving God "with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind; and second, by loving your neighbor as much as you love yourself."

When Martin had come to realize that Jesus the Prince "suffered for us and that he carried our sins on his body to the cross," he would meditate with remarkable ardor and feeling about the Prince on the cross. Whenever he would contemplate the Prince's terrible torture, he would be reduced to tears. He had an exceptional love for the great sacrament of the Eucharist, and often spent long hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. His desire was to receive the Sacrament in communion as often as he could.

St. Martin, who was always obedient and inspired by his divine teacher, dealt with his brothers and sisters with that profound love which comes from pure faith and humility of spirit. He loved people because he honestly looked on them as God's children and as his own brothers and sisters. His humility was so great that he loved them even more than himself, and considered them to be better and more virtuous than he was.

He did not blame others for their shortcomings. Since he was certain that he deserved more severe punishment for his sins than others did, he would overlook their worst offenses. He was tireless in his efforts to reform criminals, and would sit up with the sick to bring them comfort;

he would provide food, clothing, and medicine for the poor. He did all he could to care for poor farm-hands, blacks, and mulattoes, who were looked down upon as slaves, the dregs of society in their time. Common people responded by calling him “Martin the Charitable.”

The virtuous example and even the conversation of this saintly man exerted a powerful influence in drawing men to religion. It is remarkable how even today his influence can still move us toward the things of heaven. Sad to say, not all of us understand these spiritual values as well as we should, nor do we give them a proper place in our lives. Many of us, in fact, who are strongly attracted by sin, may look on these values as of little importance, even something of a nuisance, or we ignore them altogether. It is deeply rewarding for people working toward rescue to follow in the Prince’s footsteps and obey God’s commandments. I wish everyone could learn this lesson from the example that Martin gave us.

It is a blessing for a man to be found without fault, and not to make gold his life’s object, or put his trust in wealth. His future will be secure in the Master.

Who is this man, so that we can praise him, because he has done marvels in his life? His future will be secure in the Master.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you led Martin de Porres to eternal glory by a life of humility, may we please follow his example and be elevated with him in the Kingdom of Heaven. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.


 November 4  
**CHARLES BORROMEO**  
 Bishop

Born in Arona, Lombardy in 1538. After having taken honors in both civil and canon law, he was made cardinal and Bishop of Milan by his uncle, Pope Pius IV. He tirelessly promoted Christian life by the reform of his diocese, the convocation of synods, and the promulgation of regulations fostering the Church’s mission. Died on November 3, 1584.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon During his Last Synod  
by St. Charles Borromeo*

I admit that we are all weak; but if we want help, God the Master has given us the means of finding it easily. One priest may want to lead a good, holy life, as he knows he should; he may wish to be chaste and reflect heavenly virtues in the way he lives. Yet he does not resolve to use the suitable means, such as change of attitude, prayer, the avoidance of evil conversations, and harmful and dangerous friendships.

Another priest complains that as soon as he comes into church to pray the office or celebrate Mass, a thousand thoughts fill his mind and distract him from God. But what was he doing in the sacristy before he came out for the office or for Mass? How did he prepare? What means did he use to collect his thoughts and remain recollected?

Would you like me to teach you how to grow from virtue to virtue and how, if you are already recollected in prayer, you can be even more attentive next time, and can give God more pleasing worship? Listen, and I will tell you. If a tiny spark of God's love already burns inside you, do not expose it to the wind, because it may be blown out. Keep the stove tightly shut, so that it will not lose its head and grow cold. In other words, avoid distractions as well as you can; stay quiet with God; do not spend your time in useless chatter.

If teaching and preaching is your job, then study hard and apply yourself to whatever is necessary for doing the job well. Be sure that you first preach by the way you live; if you do not, people will notice that you say one thing, but live something else, and your words will bring only cynical laughter and a derisive shake of the head.

Are you in charge of a parish? If so, do not neglect the parish of your own soul; do not give yourself so completely to others that you have nothing left for yourself. You have to keep your people in mind without becoming forgetful of yourself.

My brothers, you must realize that for us churchmen nothing is more necessary than meditation. We must meditate before, during, and after everything we do. The prophet says, "I will pray, and then I will understand." When you administer the sacraments, meditate on what you are doing; when you celebrate Mass, reflect on the sacrifice you are offering; when you pray the office, think about the words you are saying and the Master to whom you are speaking. When you take care of your

people, meditate on the Master's blood that has washed them clean. "In this way, all you do becomes an action of love."

This is the way we can easily overcome the countless difficulties we have to face day after day, which, after all, are part of our work: in meditation, we find the strength to bring the Prince to birth in ourselves and other people.

Search after integrity and holiness, faith and love, patience and gentleness; these are the things you must command and teach; be an example to everyone who believes.

If you give them this advice, you will be a good slave of Prince Jesus; these are the things you must command and teach; be an example to everyone who believes.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, please keep in your people the spirit that filled St. Charles Borromeo, and have your Church be continually renewed and show the image of the Prince to the world by being conformed to the likeness of the one who is living and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



The anniversary of the dedication of the Lateran Basilica which was built by Constantine has been observed on this day since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It is the mother church of Christendom, and so the celebration extends to the whole Latin Church.

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Sermon by St. Caesarius of Arles*

My fellow Christians, today is the birthday of this church, an occasion for celebration and joy. Of course, we ought to be the true, living temple of God; but still, Christians are right to commemorate this feast of their mother the Church, because they know that through her

## NOVEMBER 9: DEDICATION OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST

they were reborn in the Spirit. At our first birth, we were receptacles of God's anger; when we are reborn, we become receptacles of his mercy. Our first birth brought death to us, and our second restored us to life.

Actually, before our Bath, we were "holy places" for the devil; but after the Bath, we earned the privilege of being temples of the Prince. And if we think more carefully about the meaning of our rescue, we will realize that we are in fact living and true temples of God. "God does not live only in structures fabricated by human hands," in homes of wood or stone; he lives mainly in souls made imitating his own image and fashioned by his own hand. And that is why the Emissary Paul says, "The Temple of God is holy, and you are that temple."

When the Prince came, he drove the devil out of our hearts, to build a temple for himself in them. And so we should do what we can with his help, so that our evil deeds will not deface that temple; because anyone who does evil does injury to the Prince. As I said earlier, before the Prince redeemed us, we were the house of the devil; but afterward, we earned the privilege of being the house of God. God himself in his loving mercy saw fit to make his own home out of us.

My fellow Christians, do we want to celebrate the birth of this temple with joy? Then let us not destroy the living temples of God in ourselves by evil actions. I will speak clearly, so that everyone will be able to understand me. Whenever we come to church, we must prepare our hearts to be as beautiful as we expect this church to be. Do you want to find this basilica immaculately clean? Then do not soil your soul with the filth of sins. Do you want this basilica to be full of light? God also wishes your soul not to be in darkness, and that the light of good deeds will shine in us, so that the one whose home is in the heavens will be glorified. God wishes to enter your soul in the same way you enter this church building, because he promised, "I will live in them, and I will walk the corridors of these hearts."

I saw water flowing eastward from beneath the threshold of the Temple. Hallelujah! Wherever the river flowed, everything began to live; those who were saved by it, exclaimed, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

When the Temple was dedicated, the people sang songs of praise and beautiful hymns. Those who were saved by it exclaimed, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

## Te Deum

We sing your praise as God;  
we humbly call you Master.  
The whole world honors you  
as its eternal Father.  
all the angels too,  
the heavens and the Powers of the universe,  
the cherubim and seraphim  
cry out in chorus,  
“Holy! Holy! Holy Master! God of Sabaoth—  
Heaven and earth are filled with the majesty of your glory!”  
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as Father of unfathomable majesty,  
your true and only Son as worthy of our adoration,  
and the Holy Spirit as our Patron.  
You, our Prince, are the King of Glory,  
the ever-eternal Son of the Father.  
And as you undertook to set man free,  
you did not recoil at the Virgin’s womb;  
and when you overcame the sting of death,  
you opened the Kingdom of Heaven to us believers;  
and now you are enthroned beside God in the glory of the Father;  
And we believe you will return to be our judge.  
And so we beg you, please come to the aid of your family,  
whom you have bought with your priceless blood.  
Record them with the Sacred People in glory.  
Please save your people, Master, and bless your inheritance,  
And be their King and support from now for ever.  
We sing your praises each and every day,  
and sanctify your name for ages and for ages upon ages.  
Grant us the blessing, Master, for this day,  
to keep us free of sin.  
Have your mercy, Master, descend upon us,  
since we have put our trust in you.

## NOVEMBER 10: LEO THE GREAT, POPE, DOCTOR 359

I have placed my trust in you, my Master;  
never let my hopes be shattered.



Born in Rome and became Pope in 440. He was a true pastor and father of souls. He labored strenuously to safeguard the integrity of the faith and vigorously defended the unity of the Church. He lessened the onrush of barbarians. Died in 461.

### *Third Reading*

### *A Sermon by Leo the Great*

Though the Catholic Church of God consists of distinct orders of members; still, in spite of the many parts of its body, the Church subsists as an integral whole, as the Emissary says, “We are all one and the same thing in the Prince,” and no one is separated from the function of another in such a way that a lower group has no connection with the head. In the unity of faith and the Bath, our community is then undivided. There is a common dignity, as the Emissary Peter says in these words: “and you are constructed like living stones into spiritual houses, a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God through Prince Jesus.” And again, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart.”

That is, everyone who is re-conceived in the Prince is made a king by the sign of the cross; he is consecrated a priest by the oil of the Holy Spirit—so that beyond the special service of our duty as priests, all spiritual and mature Christians know that they are a royal race and are sharing in the function of the priesthood. You see, what is more king-like than to find yourself ruler over your body after having surrendered your soul to God? And what is more priestly than to promise to the Master a pure conscience and to offer him in love unspotted victims on the altar of one’s heart?

Because, through the grace of God, this is a deed achieved universally on behalf of everyone, it is altogether praiseworthy and in keeping with a religious attitude for you to celebrate this day of our consecration, and to consider it a day when we are specially honored—because in fact one

sacramental priesthood is celebrated throughout the entire body of the Church. The oil that consecrates us has richer effects in the higher grades, but it is not meagerly distributed in the lower ones.

Since we share in this function, my dear brothers and sisters, we have solid ground for celebrating together; yet there will be a more genuine and excellent reason for joy if you do not dwell on the thought of our unworthiness. It is more helpful and more proper to turn your thoughts to studying the glory of the blessed Emissary Peter. We should celebrate this day in honor of him more than anything; he overflowed with copious riches from the very source of all graces, and yet though he alone received a great deal, nothing was given over to him without his sharing it. The Word become flesh lived among us, and in redeeming the whole human race, the Prince gave himself entirely.

Jesus said to Simon, “Amen I tell you that you are Rock, and this is the rock I will build my community upon, and the gates of the land of the dead will never close on it.”

For all eternity, God’s Church stands firm, and the gates of the land of the dead will never close on it.

#### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you will never allow the gates of the land of the dead to close upon your Church which was founded upon the rock of the Emissary Peter, please have the prayers of Pope Leo the Great keep us faithful to your truth and secure in your peace. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

November 11<sup>th</sup>  
ARTIN OF TOURS<sup>St</sup>  
 Bishop

Born in Pannonia of pagan parents around 316. He gave up military life and was Bathed, soon after which he founded a monastery in Ligugé, France, where he was under the direction of St. Hilary. He was ordained



and then chosen Bishop of Tours, where he provided an example of a good pastor, founding monasteries, educating the clergy, and preaching the Good News to the poor. Died in 397.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter by Sulpicius Severus*

Martin knew long beforehand the time of his death, and he told his brothers that it was near. Meanwhile, he found himself obliged to make a visitation of the parish of Candés; the clergy of that church were quarreling, and he wanted to reconcile them. Although he knew that his time on earth was short, he did not refuse to undertake the journey for such a purpose, because he believed that he would bring his virtuous life to a good end if peace was restored to the Church by his efforts.

He spent some time in Candés, or rather in its church, where he stayed. Peace was restored, and he was planning to return to his monastery, when suddenly, he began to lose his strength. He summoned his brothers and told them he was dying. Everyone who heard this was overcome with grief; and in their sorrow, they cried to him in unison, "Father, why are you deserting us? Who will care for us when you are gone? Savage wolves will attack your flock, and who will save us from their bites when our shepherd is struck down? We know you long to be with the Prince, but your reward is certain and will not be any less for being put off; you will do better to show pity for us and not abandon us."

At this, he broke into tears, because he was a man in whom the Master's pity was constantly revealed. Turning to our Master he made this reply to their pleas: "Master, if your people still need me, I am ready for the task; your will be done."

Here was a man words cannot describe. Death could not defeat him or labor daunt him. He was completely without a preference of his own; he neither was afraid to die nor did he refuse to live. With eyes and hands always raised to heaven, he never withdrew his unconquered spirit from prayer.

It happened that some priests who had gathered at his bedside suggested that he should give his poor body some relief by lying on his other side. He answered, "Let me, brothers, look at heaven rather than earth, so that my spirit will be able to start on the right path when the time comes for me to go on my journey to the Master." As he spoke these words, he saw the devil standing near. "Why are you standing

there, you bloodthirsty brute?” he cried. “You murderer, you will not have me for your prey! Abraham is welcoming me into his embrace.”

With these words, he gave up his spirit to heaven. Martin, full of joy, was welcomed by Abraham; and in this way he left this life a poor, insignificant man and entered heaven rich in God’s favor.

It is a blessing for this man not to have deceived, judged, or condemned anyone; he spoke only of the Prince, and his peace and mercy.

Here is a man words cannot describe; death could not defeat him or labor daunt him; he was neither afraid to die nor did he refuse to live. He spoke only of the Prince, and his peace and mercy.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since by his life and death Martin of Tours offered you worship and praise, please renew in our hearts the power of your love, so that neither death nor life will separate us from you. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

November 12  
TANISLAUS OSTKA  
 Religious

*A young Jesuit saint, who died while still a novice.*

#### *Third Reading*

#### *A Sermon by St. Augustine*

“If anyone wants to come after me, he should repudiate himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” The Master’s command seems difficult and painful: that anyone who wants to follow him must reject himself. But his command is not really difficult or painful, since he helps us himself to do what he commands; because the verse of the psalm addressed to him said what is true: “Because of the words that came from your lips, I have stayed in the hard paths.” His own words are also true: “My harness does not chafe and my burden is light.” This is because love makes easy whatever is difficult in his commands.

## NOVEMBER 12: STANISLAUS KOSTKA, RELIGIOUS 363

What does “he should take up his own cross” mean? It means he must endure many things that are painful; that is the way he must follow me. When he begins to follow me in my life and teachings, many people will contradict him and try to stop him or dissuade him, even those who call themselves the Prince’s students. They were the ones who were walking with the Prince and tried to stop the blind men from calling out to him.

So if you want to follow the Prince, you will take these threats or flattery or any kind of obstacle and make them over into the cross; you must put up with it, carry it, and not give way under it. And so in this world, that is the church, a world of good people, forgiven people, and saved people—or rather, those destined for rescue, but already saved by hope, as is written, “It is by hope that we are saved”—in this world of the Church, which completely follows the Prince, he has said to everyone, “If anyone wants to follow me, he is to repudiate himself.”

This is not a command for virgins to obey and brides to ignore, or for widows and not for married women, or for the clergy and not the laity. No, the whole Church, the entire body, all the members in their distinct, various functions, must follow the Prince. The one who is totally unique, the dove, the spouse who was redeemed and dowered by the blood of her bridegroom, is to follow him. There is a place in the Church for the chastity of virgins, and for the modesty of those who are married. In fact, all her members have their place, and this is where they are to follow the Prince, in their function and way of life. They must reject themselves; that is, they must not presume on their own strength. They must take up their cross by enduring in the world for the Prince’s sake whatever pain the world brings.

They should love the one who is the only one who can neither deceive nor be deceived, who is the only one who will not fail them. They should love him because his promises are true. Faith sometimes falters because he does not reward us immediately; but hold out, be steadfast, endure, and bear the delay, and you have carried the cross.

This holy man worked wonders in the sight of God; he praised God with his whole heart; may he intercede for sinful mankind.

He was a man without bitterness, with a life that was a living praise to God; he avoided all evil actions and kept himself sinless to the end;

may he intercede for sinful mankind.

**Prayer**

Dear Father of love and giver of everything good, since in St. Stanislaus you combined remarkable innocence with the spirit of penance, may those of us who have not followed his innocence by the help of his prayers follow his example of penance. We make this request through our Master, Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Ukraine of Orthodox parents about 1580. When he embraced the Catholic faith, he became a Basilian monk; he was ordained and chosen Bishop of Polock, where he worked faithfully for the unity of the Church. Enemies plotted his death, and he was martyred in 1623.

*Third Reading From the Encyclical Ecclesiam Dei by Pope Pius IX*

In designing his Church, God worked with such skill that in the fullness of time it would resemble a single great family embracing every human being. It can be identified, as we know, by certain distinctive characteristics, particularly its universality and unity.

The Master the Prince passed on to his Emissaries the task he had received from the Father: "I have been given every authority in heaven and on earth; and so go and make students from every nation." He wanted the Emissaries as a body to be intimately bound together, first by the inner tie of the same faith and love "which flows into our hearts through the Holy Spirit," and second, by the external tie of authority exercised by one Emissary over the others. For this, he assigned the primacy to Peter, the source and visible basis of their unity for all time. So that the unity and agreement among them would endure, God wisely stamped them, one might say, with the mark of holiness and martyrdom.

Both these distinctions fell to Josaphat, archbishop of Polock of the Slavonic rite of the Eastern Church. He is appropriately looked on as the

## Also November 12: Josaphat, Bishop, ΜΑΡΤΥΡ65

great glory and strength of the Eastern Rite Slavs. Few have brought them greater honor or contributed more to their spiritual welfare than their pastor and Emissary Josaphat, especially when he gave his life as a martyr for the unity of the Church. He felt, in fact, that God had inspired him to restore worldwide unity to the Church, and he realized that his greatest chance of success lay in preserving the Slavonic rite and St. Basil's rule of monastic life within the one universal Church.

Since he was mainly concerned with seeing his own people reunited to the See of Peter, he looked for every available argument which would foster and maintain Church unity. His best arguments were drawn from liturgical books, sanctioned by the Fathers of the Church, which were in common use among the Eastern Christians, including the dissidents. Thus thoroughly prepared, he set out to restore the unity of the Church. A forceful man of fine sensibilities, he met with such success that his opponents dubbed him "the thief of souls."

Jesus said, "Holy Father, protect those you have given me with the power of your name so that they will be completely one thing; and then the world will know that it is you who sent me.

"I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they will be completely one thing; and then the world will know that it is you who sent me.

### Prayer

Dear Master, please fill your Church with the Spirit that gave St. Josaphat courage to give up his life for his people, and by his prayers, may your Spirit make us strong and willing to offer our lives for our brothers and sisters. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

November 13  

**FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI**  
 Virgin

Born in Lombardy, Italy, in 1850. At Codogno, Italy in the diocese of Lodi, she founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in 1880. In 1887, she established many schools, hospitals, and orphanages. With the encouragement of Pope Leo XIII, she left for the United States in 1889, where, for the next twenty-eight years, she established schools, hospitals, and orphanages. Her missionary zeal also led her to South America, where she founded schools in Argentina, Brazil, and Nicaragua. Mother Cabrini died in Chicago on December 22, 1917, and on July 7, 1946, she became the first United States citizen to be canonized.

*Third Reading*     *A Homily at the Canonization of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini by Pope Pius XII*

Inspired by the grace of God, we join the saints in honoring the holy virgin Frances Xavier Cabrini. She was a humble woman who became outstanding, not because she was famous, rich, or powerful, but because she lived a virtuous life. From the tender years of her youth, she kept her innocence as white as a lily and preserved it carefully with the thorns of penitence; as the years progressed, she was moved by a kind of instinct and supernatural zeal to dedicate her whole life to the service and greater glory of God.

She welcomed delinquent youths into safe homes and taught them to live honest and holy lives. She consoled those who were in prison and recalled to them the hope of eternal life. She encouraged prisoners to reform themselves and live honest lives.

She comforted the sick and infirm in the hospitals and painstakingly cared for them; she extended a friendly and helping hand especially to immigrants, and offered them necessary shelter and relief, because after they had left their homeland behind, they were wandering in a foreign country with no place to turn for help. Because of their condition, she saw that they were in danger of deserting the practice of Christian virtues and their Catholic faith.

Where did she acquire all that strength and inexhaustible energy by which she was able to perform so many good works and surmount so

## NOVEMBER 15: ALBERT THE GREAT, BISHOP, DOCTOR

many difficulties involving material things, travel, and men?

Undoubtedly, she accomplished all this through the faith which was always so vibrant and alive in her heart; through the divine love which burned inside her; and, finally, through constant prayer by which she was closely united with God, from whom she humbly asked and obtained whatever her human weakness could not obtain.

In the face of the endless cares and anxieties of life, she never let anything turn her aside from searching and aiming to please God and to work for his glory, for which nothing, aided by God's grace, seemed too laborious or difficult, or beyond human strength.

I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was homeless and you took me in. Now I tell you this: when you did all this for the most neglected of my brothers and sisters, you did it for me.

This is what I command: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. Now I tell you this: when you did all this for the most neglected of my brothers and sisters, you did it for me.

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you called St. Frances Xavier Cabrini from Italy to serve the immigrants of America, please teach us by her example concern for foreigners, the sick, and the frustrated, and help us by her prayers to see the Prince in all the men and women we meet. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born in Lauingen along the Danube about 1206. He studied at Padua and Paris, entered the Dominicans, and excelled as a teacher. After ordination as Bishop of Ratisbon, he worked hard to establish peace among peoples and between cities. He wrote brilliantly on many subjects in both sacred and secular science. Died in Cologne in 1280.

*Third Reading**A Commentary on Luke by St. Albert the Great*

“Do this to remind yourselves of me.” Two things should be noted here: The first is the command that we should use this sacrament, which is indicated when he says, “Do this.” The second is that this sacrament commemorates the Master’s going to death for our sake.

“Do this.” Certainly he would demand nothing more beneficial, pleasant, useful, desirable, or similar to eternal life. We will look at each of these qualities separately.

This sacrament is beneficial because it bestows removal of sins; it is extremely practical because it bestows the fullness of grace upon us in this life. “The Father of spirits teaches us what is useful for our sanctification.” And his sanctification is in the Prince’s sacrifice: that is, when he offers himself in this sacrament to the Father for our redemption, and to us for our use. “I make myself sacred for their sakes. The Prince, who through the Holy Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, will scrub our consciences clean of dead deeds to worship the living God.”

And we cannot do anything more pleasant; because what is better than God’s revealing his whole attractiveness to us? “You gave them bread from heaven, not the result of human labor, but a bread endowed with every pleasure and enjoyable to every sense of taste; because this reality of yours revealed your kindness toward your children, and in service to the desire of each recipient, it changed to suit each person’s taste.”

He could not have commanded anything more useful, because this sacrament is the fruit that grows on the tree of life. Anyone who receives this sacrament with the devotion of sincere faith will never taste death. “It is a tree of life for those who grasp it, and it is a blessing for anyone to hold fast to it. Anyone who eats me will live through me.”

Nor could he have commanded anything more desirable, because this sacrament produces love and union. It is characteristic of the greatest love to give itself as food. “Had not the men of my tent exclaimed, ‘Who will give us the meat of his body to feed our hunger?’” as if to say, “I have loved them and they have loved me so much that I want to be inside them, and they want to receive me so that they will become parts of my body.” There is no more intimate or natural means for them to be united to me and I to them.

Nor could he have commanded anything which is more like eternal



## November 16: MARGARET OF SCOTLAND, Holy Woman

life. Eternal life flows from this sacrament because God with all his attractiveness pours himself out upon those who receive the Blessed Sacrament.

Just as the Father handed a Kingdom over to me, I now hand one over to you; in my Kingdom, you will dine at my table.

I chose you and put you here for you to go on and bear fruit; in my Kingdom, you will dine at my table.

### Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you endowed St. Albert with the talent of combining human wisdom and divine faith, please keep us true to his teachings so that the advance of human knowledge will deepen our knowledge and love of you. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



Born about 1046 in Hungary where her father was exiled. She was married to King Malcolm III of Scotland and gave birth to eight children. The ideal mother and queen, she died in Edinburgh in 1093.

### Third Reading

### *The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World by the Second Vatican Council*

Husband and wife, by the sacred pact of marriage, are no longer two; they are one flesh. By their intimate union of persons and actions, they give mutual help and service to each other, experience the meaning of their unity, and gain an ever deeper understanding of it day by day.

This intimate union in mutual self-giving of two persons, as well as the good of the children, demands full fidelity from both, and an indissoluble unity between them.

The Prince, the Master, has abundantly blessed this richly complex love, which springs from the divine source of love and is founded on the

model of his union with the Church.

In earlier times, God met his people in a pact of love and fidelity; so now the Savior of mankind, the Bridegroom of the Church, meets Christian husbands and wives in the sacrament of matrimony. Further, he remains with them so that husband and wife will, in mutual self-giving, love each other with perpetual fidelity, in the same way as he gave himself up for the Church.

True married love is caught up into God's love; it is guided and enriched by the redeeming power of the Prince and the saving action of the Church, so that the partners will be effectively led to God and receive help and strength in the sublime responsibility of parenthood.

Christian partners are therefore strengthened, and as it were consecrated, by a special sacrament for the duties and the dignity of their state. By the power of this sacrament, they fulfill their obligations to each other and to their family and are filled with the Spirit of the Prince. This Spirit pervades their whole lives with faith, hope, and love. Thus, they promote their own perfection and each other's sanctification, and so contribute together to the greater glory of God.

Hence, with parents leading the way by example and family prayer, their children—in fact, everyone within the family circle—will find it easier to make progress in natural virtues, their rescue, and holiness. Husband and wife who are raised to the dignity and responsibility of parenthood will be zealous in fulfilling their task as educators, especially in the sphere of religious education, a task that is primarily their own.

Children, as active members of the family, contribute in their own way to the holiness of their parents. With the love of grateful hearts, with loving respect and trust, they will return the generosity of their parents and will stand by them as true sons and daughters when they meet with hardship and the loneliness of old age.

A woman who respects the Master is to be praised; she is dressed in strength and dignity.

Give her the reward of his actions; they will proclaim her as she enters the gates; she is dressed in strength and dignity.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you gave St. Margaret of Scotland a special love for

the poor, please let her example and prayers help us to become a living sign of your goodness. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also November 16  
ERTRUDE  
VIRGIN

Born in Eisleben, Thuringia, in 1256. As a young girl, she entered the Cistercian Convent in Helfta, and studied literature and philosophy. She dedicated herself to the pursuit of perfection, and gave herself over to prayer and contemplation. Died on November 17, 1301.

*Third Reading*

*The Revelations by St. Gertrude*

May my soul bless you, Master God, my Creator, may my soul bless you. From the very core of my being may all your merciful gifts sing your praise. Your generous care for your daughter has been rich in mercy; in fact, it has been immeasurable, and as far as I am able, I express to you my gratitude. I praise and glorify your great patience which put up with me even though, from my infancy and childhood, adolescence and early womanhood, until I was nearly twenty-six, I was always so blindly irresponsible. Looking back, I see that but for your protecting hand, I would have been completely without conscience in thought, word, or action.

But you came to my assistance by giving me a natural dislike for evil and a natural attraction to what is good, and provided me with necessary correction from those among whom I lived. Otherwise, I would now have to admit to doing my own will whenever the opportunity offered itself, living like some pagan in a pagan society, and never understanding that you, my God, reward good deeds and punish evil ones. Yet you had chosen me to be specially trained to serve you. I was a child of five when I began to live in a convent surrounded by your very devoted friends.

To make up for the way I previously lived, I offer you, my supremely loving Father, all the sufferings of your beloved Son from that first infant cry as he lay on the hay in the manger, until that final moment when, bowing his head, the Prince gave up his spirit with a tremendous cry. I

think, as I make this offering, of all he underwent, his needs as a baby, his dependence as a young child, the hardships of youth, and the trials of early manhood.

To atone for all my neglect, I offer, supremely loving Father, all that the only Son you ever fathered did during his life, whether this was in thought, word, or action. That sacred life was, I know, totally perfect in all respects, from the moment he descended from your heavenly throne and came into this world until finally he presented the glory of his victorious human nature to you, his Father.

And now, as an act of gratitude, I praise and worship you, Father, in deepest humility for your supremely loving kindness and mercy. Though I was hurrying to my eternal loss, your thoughts of me were thoughts of peace and not suffering, and you lifted me up with so many great favors. To these, you added the inestimable gift of your intimate friendship, and in various ways allowed me to possess your Son's own heart, that supremely noble receptacle of God united with the Godhead. You refused me no pleasure that could be mine.

Finally, you drew me to yourself by your faithful promises of the good things you would give me from the moment of my death. These promises are so great that for their sake alone, even if you had given me nothing besides them, my heart would sob after you always and be filled with a lively hope.

The Master loved Gertrude with an eternal love; from her childhood, he drew her to himself and led her into the wilderness; and there he spoke tenderly to her.

He married her to himself forever in faith and love; from her childhood, he drew her to himself and led her into the wilderness; and there he spoke tenderly to her.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you filled the heart of St. Gertrude with the presence of your love, please bring light into our darkness and let us experience the joy of your presence and the power of your grace. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

## NOVEMBER 17: ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY, HOLY WOMAN

### November 17 LIZABETH OF HUNGARY Holy Woman

Born in 1207. She was the daughter of Andrew, King of Hungary. While still a young girl, she was married to Louis the Landgrave of Thuringia, and bore three children. She devoted herself to prayer and meditation. After her husband's death, she embraced a life of poverty, erecting a hospital in which she served the sick herself. Died in Marburg in 1231.

#### *Third Reading*

*A Letter by Conrad of Marburg,  
spiritual director of St. Elizabeth*

From this time on, Elizabeth's goodness greatly increased. She was a lifelong friend of the poor, and gave herself entirely to relieving the hungry. She ordered that one of her castles be converted into a hospital, in which she gathered many of the weak and feeble. She generously gave charity to everyone in need, not only in that place, but in all the territories of her husband's empire. She spent all her own revenue from her husband's four principalities, and finally sold her luxurious possessions and rich clothes for the sake of the poor.

Twice a day, in the morning and evening, Elizabeth went to visit the sick. She personally cared for those who were particularly repulsive; to some she gave food, to others clothing; some she carried on her own shoulders, and performed many other kindly services. Her husband of happy memory, gladly approved of all these charitable works. Finally, when her husband died, she aimed at the highest perfection; filled with tears, she pleaded with me to let her beg for charity from door to door.

On Good Friday of that year, when the altars had been stripped, she laid her hands on the altar in a chapel in her own town, where she had established the Franciscans, and before witnesses she voluntarily renounced all worldly display and everything that our Savior in the Good News advises us to abandon. Even then, she saw that she could still be distracted by the cares and worldly glory which had surrounded her while her husband was alive. Against my will, she followed me to Marburg; here in the town, she built a hospice where she gathered the miserable

and contemptible at her own table.

Apart from those active good works, I declare before God that I have seldom seen a more contemplative woman. When she was coming from private prayer, some religious men and women often saw her face shining marvelously and light coming from her eyes like the rays of the sun.

Before her death, I heard her confession. When I asked what should be done about her goods and possessions, she replied that anything that seemed to be hers belonged to the poor. She asked me to distribute everything except one worn-out dress in which she wished to be buried. When all this had been decided, she received the body of our Master. Afterward, until vespers, she spoke often of the holiest things she had heard in sermons. Then, she devoutly commended to God all of those who were sitting near her, and as if falling into a gentle sleep, she died.

You acted bravely, and your heart has been strengthened because you loved chastity. Your name will be praised forever.

Your prayers and generosity have been accepted in God's sight, and because of them he has remembered you. Your name will be praised forever.

#### Prayer

Dear Father, since you helped St. Elizabeth of Hungary to recognize and honor the Prince in the poor of this world, may her prayers please help us to serve our brothers and sisters in time of trouble and need. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

November 18

## EDICATION OF THE CHURCHES OF STS. ETER AND AUL

Anniversaries of dedication were celebrated in the Vatican Basilica of St. Peter and in the Basilica of St. Paul on the Ostian Way as early as the twelfth century. The two basilicas had been completed under Pope

## NOVEMBER 18: DEDICATION OF THE CHURCHES 375 OF STS. PETER AND PAUL

Sylvestor and Siricius in the fourth century. More recently, this commemoration was extended to the whole Latin rite. Just as the Maternity of the Virgin Mother of God is celebrated on the anniversary of the Basilica of St. Mary Major (August 5), on this day, we honor the two chiefs of the Prince's Emissaries.

### *Third Reading*

### *A Sermon by St. Leo the Great*

"The death of his holy people is valuable in the Master's eyes." No type of cruelty can tear down the religion established by the mystery of the Prince's cross. The Church is not lessened by persecutions; it is only increased. The Master's field is always being enriched with a more plentiful harvest, while the seeds which are planted one by one give a yield that is many times their number.

From this field, those two famous sprouts of the divine seed grew up into a great progeny, witnessed by thousands of blessed martyrs. In imitation of the Emissaries' triumph, these martyrs have adorned our city far and wide with people dressed in purple and shining brilliantly, and they have crowned it with a tiara fashioned by the glory of many precious stones.

On the commemoration of all saints it is right for us to celebrate this heavenly band, molded by God as models of patience and a support for our faith; but we must hold our heads higher and take greater pride in the eminence of these two forbears, whom the grace of God raised to so high a summit among all the members of the Church, and created like two eyes that bring light to the body whose head is the Prince.

As to their deserts and virtues, which no words can describe, we should not think of any difference or distinction between them; their calling was the same, their struggles similar, and they had the same kind of death.

Our experience has shown, as our predecessors have proved, that we may believe and hope that in all the struggles of the present life, by the mercy of God, we will always be helped by the prayers of our special patrons. In the same sense as we are humbled by our own sins, we will be elevated by what these Emissaries have earned.

In life, the holy Emissaries served the Prince with a generous spirit, and they founded the Church on the witness of their blood; they drank the

Master's blood and became the friends of God.

Just as love united them in this life, death could not separate them; they drank the Master's blood and became the friends of God.

**Prayer**

Dear Master, please give your Church the protection of the Emissaries, since it first received from them the faith in the Prince; may they help your church grow in your grace until the end of time. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also November 18  


 Rose Philippine Ouchesne  
 VIRGIN

Born on August 28, 1769 in Grenoble, France, she was educated by the Visitation nuns in Ste. Marie d'en Haut, and entered the convent at 17. During the Reign of Terror the community was expelled from France, and Philippine returned home. After the Concordat of 1801, she attempted to rebuild her convent, but failed; in 1804, she persuaded Mother Madeleine Sophie Barat to accept the convent of Ste. Marie, and she and four others became postulants of the Sacred Heart nuns, where she was professed in 1805. In 1818, she and four others were sent to the United States where they founded a convent in a log cabin near St. Louis. She opened the first American free school west of the Mississippi, and by 1828 had founded six houses. She resigned as superior at 71 to begin a school for Indians at Sugar Creek, which she had to resign because of health. Died on November 18, 1852, and was beatified in 1940 and canonized on July 3, 1988 by Pope John Paul II.

*Third Reading*      *A Sermon on Virgins' Clothing by St. Cyprian*

Now I would like to address the order of virgins. Because their way of life is higher, our concern for them must be greater. If we compare the Church to a tree, then they are its blossom; virgins reveal the beauty of God's grace, they are the image of God that reflects the holiness of the Master, and they are the more illustrious members of the Prince's flock. The more virgins there are, the greater is the Church's joy.



## Also November 18: Philippine Duchesne, Virgins

It is to these virgins, then, that I am speaking and giving my advice, out of love rather than any sense of authority; and I do this without claiming the right to criticize them, because I am among the last and most insignificant and am fully aware of my unimportance. No, I am doing it because the more anxious and concerned I am about them, the more I am afraid of the devil's attack; because it is not a shallow concern or empty fear that pays attention to the path of rescue and keeps the Master's life-giving commandments.

They have dedicated themselves to the Prince, and in renouncing the pleasures of the flesh, have consecrated themselves body and soul to God, in order to finish a task that is destined to win a great prize; they should not make efforts to adorn themselves or give pleasure to anyone but the Master, from whom they hope to receive the reward for their chastity.

Virgins, please persevere in the way of life you have begun; persevere in what you are going to be; because you will receive a glorious prize for your virtue, a supremely excellent reward for your chastity. You have already begun now to be what we will all be in the future; you already possess, here in this world, the glory of the return to life. You pass through this world without the world's infection; if you persevere in chastity and virginity, you are equal to God's angels. Only keep your profession of virginity strong and inviolate. You began your way of life courageously; now persevere without faltering. Look for proper conduct as your adornment, not jewelry or attractive clothing.

Listen to the voice of the Emissary Paul, who was God's chosen receptacle sent to announce the commands of heaven. Paul said, "The first man was made from the dirt of the earth; the second is from heaven. Those who are made from dirt are like the one who was dirty; those who are in heaven are like the one who is from heaven. In the same way as we have carried the image of the man of dirt, we should carry the image of the man who is from heaven." This image is revealed in virginity, purity, holiness, and truth.


The thoughts of a virgin are always upon God; her desire is to be holy in body and soul.

The God of my heart is my serving forever; her desire is to be holy in body and soul.

## Prayer

Gracious God, since you filled the heart of Philippine Duchesne with love and missionary zeal and gave her the desire to make you known among all peoples, please fill those of us who honor her memory today with that same love and zeal to extend your Kingdom to the ends of the earth. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

November 21


 RESENTATION OF MARY

This feast commemorates the dedication of the church of St. Mary built in Jerusalem near the Temple. It recalls the tradition that Mary was presented as a small child to the Master by her parents.

*Third Reading**A Sermon by St. Augustine*

As he stretched out his hand over his students, the Prince and Master declared, “Here are my mother and my relatives; anyone who does the will of my Father who sent me is my brother and sister and mother.”

I would urge you to ponder these words. Did the Virgin Mary, who believed by faith and conceived by faith, who was the chosen one from whom our Savior was born among human beings, who was created by the Prince before the Prince was created in her—did she not do the will of the Father? Of course the blessed Mary certainly did the Father’s will, and so it was for her a greater thing to have been the Prince’s student than to have been his mother, and she was more fortunate in her being a student than in her motherhood. It was her happiness to bear first in her womb the one she would obey as her Master.

Now listen and see if the words of Scripture do not agree with what I said. The Master was passing by and crowds were following him. His miracles gave proof of divine power, and a woman exclaimed, “How wonderful it would have been to be the womb that carried you; what a blessing to be that womb!” But the Master, not wanting people to look for their happiness in a purely physical relationship, said, “It is more of a blessing to listen to what God says and keep it.”

Mary listened to what God said and kept it, and so she has been

blessed; she kept God's truth in her mind, which is a nobler thing than carrying his body in her womb. The truth and the body were both the Prince; he was kept in Mary's mind insofar as he is truth, and he was carried in her womb insofar as he is man; but what is kept in the mind is of a higher order than what is carried in the womb.

The Virgin Mary is both holy and one who has received a blessing; and yet the Church is greater than she. Mary is a part of the Church, a member of the Church—a holy, eminent, in fact the most eminent—member; but still only a member of the entire body. The body is undoubtedly greater than she, who is one of its parts. The body has the Master for its head, and head and body together make up the whole Prince. In other words, our head is divine; our head is God.

Now, my friends, give me your whole attention, because you are also parts of the Prince; you are also the body of the Prince. Consider how you can yourselves be among those of whom the Master said, "Here are my mother and brothers." Do you wonder how you can be the mother of the Prince? He himself said, "Whoever listens and fulfills the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." As for our being brothers and sisters of the Prince, we can understand this, because although there is only one inheritance and the Prince is the only Son, his mercy would not allow him to remain alone. It was his wish that we too would be heirs of the Father, and co-heirs with himself.

Now, having said that all of you are brothers of the Prince, am I not to dare to call you his mother? I would dare even less to deny his words. Tell me how Mary became the Prince's mother, if it was not by giving birth to the parts of the Prince's body? Those of you to whom I am speaking are the parts of the Prince's body. Then who were you born from? "From mother Church," I hear the answer of your hearts. You became sons of this mother at your Bath; you came to birth then as parts of the Prince's body. Now you in your turn must draw to the font of the Bath as many as you possibly can. You became sons when you were born there yourselves, and now by bringing others to birth in the same way, you have it in your power to become mothers of the Prince.

I will send out a joyful exclamation to the Master; my soul will be in ecstasy in my God, because he has dressed me in the robe of rescue, like a bride adorned with her jewels.

My soul is full of the Master's magnificence; my spirit is bursting with joy in God, my Savior, because he has dressed me in the robe of rescue, like a bride adorned with her jewels.

*Prayer*

Eternal Father, since we honor the holiness and glory of the Virgin Mary, may her prayers please bring us the fullness of your life and love. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.



From a basilica dedicated to St. Cecilia in the fifth century, devotion to her spread, because of stories of her sufferings. She is praised as the perfect model of the Christian woman because of her virginity and martyrdom.

*Third Reading*

*A Discourse on the Psalms by St. Augustine*

“Praise the Master with a lyre, and sing to him with a ten-stringed harp. Sing him a new song.” Rid yourself of what is old and worn out, because you know a new song. A new man under a new treaty: a new song. This new song does not belong to the old man; only the new man learns it, the man restored from his fallen condition through the grace of God; the one who now shares in the new Treaty—that is, in the Kingdom of Heaven. All our love now aspires to it, and sings a new song; so let us sing a new song with our lives rather than our lips.

“Sing him a new song; sing to him with a tune of joy.” Every one of us tries to discover how to sing to God. You must sing to him, but you must sing well; he does not want your voice to grate on his ears, so sing well, my brothers and sisters.

If you were asked to sing to please some musician, you would not want to do it without having taken music lessons, because you would not like to insult an expert in the art. An untrained listener does not notice the faults a musician would point out to you. Then who dares to sing

well for God, the great artist whose discrimination is faultless, whose attention is on the smallest detail, and whose ear nothing escapes? When will you be able to offer him such a perfect performance that you will not displease such a supremely discerning listener in any way?

See how he himself gives you a way of singing; do not search for words, as if you could find a lyric which would give God pleasure. Sing to him “with songs of joy.” This is singing well to God, just singing songs of joy.

But how is this done? You must first understand that words cannot express the things that are sung by the heart. Take the case of people singing while harvesting in the fields or vineyards or when any other strenuous work is in progress. Although they begin by giving expression to their happiness in sung words, there is very soon a change; as if they are so happy that words can no longer express what they feel, they discard the restricting syllables. They burst out into a simple sound of joy and euphoria. This cry of joy is a sound that means that the heart is bringing to birth what it cannot utter in words.

Now who is more deserving of such a cry of euphoria than God himself, whom all words fail to describe? If words will not serve, and yet you must not remain silent, what else can you do but cry out with joy? Your heart must be happy beyond words, soaring into an immensity of gladness that has no restraints from the ties to syllables. “Sing to him with songs of joy.”

My mouth will be full of your praise; I will sing of your greatness all day long. My lips will shout for joy when I sing to you.

In you I will find my happiness and pleasure; I will sing to your name, Supreme Being. My lips will shout for joy when I sing to you.

#### Prayer

Dear Master of mercy, please be close to those who call upon you, and with St. Cecilia to help us, please listen to our prayers and answer them. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

November 23  
 Bl. Miguel Agustín PRO  
 PRIEST, MARTYR

Born near Zacatecas, Mexico on January 13, 1891. He became a Jesuit and studied in the United States and Belgium, where he was ordained in 1926. On his return to Mexico, he carried out his ministry secretly, because of the persecution. Eventually, he was arrested on false charges and condemned to death, and was shot on November 23, 1927. Beatified by Pope John Paul II on September 25, 1988.

*Third Reading*

*A Sermon by St. Augustine*

The Church flourishes everywhere through the glorious deeds of the holy martyrs; and with our own eyes, we can judge the truth of our song, that “The death of his holy ones is valuable in the Master’s sight.” It is valuable in our sight and in the sight of the Master as well, because they died in his name.

But the price of these deaths is the death of one man; see how many deaths he paid for by dying himself! Because if he had not died, would the grains of wheat have multiplied? You heard what he said on his way to his suffering, which was our redemption: “If a grain of wheat does not fall to the ground and die, it remains alone; but if it dies, it multiplies itself many times over.”

On the cross, he made a great exchange; there, the purse which held our price was opened; because when the soldier’s spear opened his side, the price of the whole world flowed out. In this way he bought the faithful and the martyrs. But the faith of the martyrs has been tested; their blood is their proof. They paid back the price the Prince paid for them, and in this way fulfilled what St. John said: “We must give up our lives for our brothers and sisters, in the same way that the Prince gave up his life for us.”

Somewhere else, it is said, “You are seated at a huge table; observe carefully all that is set in front of you, because you must prepare a banquet like this also.” The table is huge, because the banquet is no one but the Master of the dinner himself. No one has his guests eat himself, and yet this is precisely what our Master the Prince does; though he is host, he is himself both food and drink. The martyrs recognized the food

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and drink they were given, to make repayment in kind.

But how can they make repayment, unless he first spends his riches on them and gives them the means to repay? And what does the psalm we have sung recommend when it says, “The death of holy people is valuable in the Master’s eyes”?

In this psalm we human beings ponder the wonderful things we have requested from God, the great gifts of the Omnipotent Being; God created man, searched for him when he was lost, pardoned him when he was found, supported him when he struggled in weakness, did not abandon him when he was in danger, crowned him with victory, and gave himself as the prize. As we recollect all this, we humans exclaim, “What shall I give the Master for all that he has given me? I will take the cup that saved me in my hands.”

What is this cup? It is the cup of suffering, bitter yet healthful—the cup which, if the physician did not drink from it, a sick man would be afraid to touch. Yes, it is the cup of suffering, and the Prince is speaking of it when he says, “Father, if it is possible, please let this cup pass away from me.”

The martyrs said of this cup, “I will take the cup that saved me in my hands and call on the Master’s name.” But are you not afraid you will weaken? “No,” they answer. And why? Because “I will call upon the Master’s name.” Do you think martyrs could have been victorious, unless the one who said “Take heart; I have won the battle with the world” was victorious in the martyrs? The Master of the heavens directed their minds and tongues; through them he won out over the devil on earth and crowned them as martyrs in heaven. It is such a blessing to have drunk from this cup! Those people’s torments are at an end, and they have taken their place of honor. And so, my dear friends, consider: although you cannot see with your eyes, do so with your minds and souls, and see that “the death of the holy people is valuable in the sight of the Master.”

I have fought in the good match; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith. Now a winner’s crown for virtue is waiting for me.

Nothing has seemed worthwhile to me except to know the Prince, to be united with him in his sufferings, and to carry his death in my body. Now a winner’s crown for virtue is waiting for me.

## Prayer

Dear God, our Father, since you gave your slave Miguel Agustín the grace to search fervently for your greater glory and the rescue of your people, please bestow on us the favor of serving you and glorifying you through his intercession and following his example by performing our daily duties with loyalty and joy and effectively helping our neighbors. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also November 23  
 Clement I  
 Pope, MARTYR

This third pope to rule the Roman Church after St. Peter reigned toward the end of the first century. He wrote the famous Letter to the Corinthians to strengthen and encourage peace and unity among them.

*Third Reading**A Letter to the Corinthians by St. Clement*

My friends, how remarkable and wondrous are God's gifts! There is eternal life, joy in virtue, truth in freedom, and faith, confidence, and self-control in holiness. And these are the gifts that we can grasp; what of all the others that are being prepared for those who look for him? Only the Creator, the Father of the ages, the one who is totally holy, knows their grandeur and loveliness; and so we should work hard to be found among those who are waiting for him, so that we will be able to share in these promised gifts. And how is this to be, my dear brothers and sisters? It will come about if our minds remain fixed on God by our faith; if we aim at what is pleasing and acceptable to him; and if we fulfill what is in harmony with his faultless will and follow the path of truth, rejecting all evil conduct, viciousness, greed, quarrels, malice, and deceit.

This is the path, my friends, by which we find our rescue, Prince Jesus, the high priest of our sacrifices, and the defender and ally in our helplessness. It is through him that we gaze on the highest heaven, through him we can see the reflection of God's pure, sublime face, through him the eyes of our hearts have been opened, through him our



## Also November 23: Clement 1, Pope, Martyr 85

foolish, darkened understanding opens toward the light, and through him the Master has willed that we will taste eternal knowledge. “He reflects God’s majesty” and “is as much superior to angels as the name he has received is more distinguished than theirs.”

Let us then serve in his army, my brothers and sisters, and follow his blameless commands with all our might. The great cannot exist without the small, nor the small without the great; they blend together to their mutual advantage. Take the body, for example. The head is nothing without the feet, just as the feet are nothing without the head. The smallest parts of our body are necessary and valuable to the whole; all of them work together and are subject to each other for the preservation of the whole body.

Our entire body, then, will be preserved in Jesus the Prince, and each of us should be subject to his neighbors in accordance with the grace given to each. The stronger should care for the weak, and the weak should respect the stronger; the wealthy should give to the poor, and the poor should thank God that he has sent them someone to supply their needs. The wise should reveal their wisdom in good deeds, not in words, and the humble should not talk about their own humility and let others give evidence of it. The upshot is that since we have all this from him, we ought to thank him for it all. Amen.

This wise man built his house upon rock; no deceit was found in his mouth, and God chose him as his priest.

Here is a great priest, who in his days pleased God and was found virtuous, and God chose him as his priest.

### Prayer

Omnipotent, eternally living God, since we praise your power and glory revealed to us in the lives of your saints, please give us joy in this feast of the priest and martyr St. Clement, who gave evidence with his blood to the love he proclaimed and the Good News he preached. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

Also November 23  
**Columban**  
 Abbot

Born in Ireland in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century. He was well trained in the classics and theology, and after becoming a monk, he went to France and founded many monasteries which he ruled with strict discipline. After being forced into exile, he went to Italy and founded the monastery at Bobbio. Died in 615.

*Third Reading*

*An Instruction by St. Columban*

Moses wrote in the Law, “God made man in his image and likeness.” Consider, I ask you, the dignity of these words. God is omnipotent; we cannot see or understand, describe or evaluate him. Yet he fashioned man out of clay and endowed him with the nobility of his own image. What has man in common with God? Or what has earth in common with spirit, because God is a spirit? It is a glorious privilege that God should grant man his eternal image and the likeness of his character. Man’s likeness to God, if he preserves it, imparts high dignity to him.

If a person applies the virtues planted in his soul to the right purpose, he will be like God. God’s commands have taught us to give him back the virtues he planted in us in our first innocence: The first command is “to love our Master with our whole heart” because “he loved us first” from the beginning, before our existence. Loving God renews his image in us; anyone who loves God keeps his commandments, because he said, “If you love me, keep my commandments.” His command is that we love each other; in his own words, “This is my commandment: for you to love each other in the same way as I have loved you.”

True love is shown not merely “in words, but in actions and truth.” So we must return our image undefiled and holy to our Father God, because he is holy; in the words of Scripture, “Be holy, because I am holy.” We must restore his image with love, because he is love; in John’s words, “God is love.” We must restore it with loyalty and truth, because he is loyal and truthful. The image we paint must not be one of someone not like God; for example, a person who is abrasive and irascible and proud would reveal the image of a despot.

We should not imprint on ourselves the image of a despot; let the

Prince paint his image in us with his words, “I leave you peace for my legacy; my peace is what I give you.” But the knowledge that peace is good is no benefit to us if we do not practice it. The most valuable objects are usually the most fragile; costly things need the most careful handling. And what is especially fragile is what is lost by careless talk and destroyed by the slightest injury to a brother. People like nothing better than discussing and minding the business of others, passing gratuitous comments at random, and criticizing people behind their backs. So those who cannot say, “The Master has given me a discriminating tongue, so that I can say a word in support of someone who is weary” should keep silent, or if they do say anything, it should promote peace.

I will show you what anyone who comes to me and listens to what I say and acts on it is like: he is like a man who, in building his house, dug deeply and laid its foundation on a rock.

It is a blessing for a person to hold the Master in awe. Who is his equal? Who can compare with him? He is like a man who, in building his house, dug deeply and laid its foundation on a rock.

#### Prayer

Dear Master, since you called St. Columban to live the monastic life and to preach the Good News with zeal, may his prayers and example please help us to look for you above everything and to work with all our hearts for the spread of the faith. We make this request through our Master Prince Jesus, your Son, who is alive and reigning with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, through all the ages of ages. Amen.

November 24  
ndrew ung-ΔC, PRIEST  
 And Companions,  
 All Martyrs

The beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century saw the planting of the Good News of the Prince among the Vietnamese, and this seed grew through the blood of martyrs and the spiritual joy of the newly Bathed faithful. During the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, particularly during the reign of Emperor Minh-Mang (1820-40), many Christians were martyred, including bishops, priests, men and women religious, and members of the laity. Some were decapitated, other hanged, others burned or whipped to death, and others died in their imprisonment. On June 19, 1988, Pope John Paul II declared 117 martyrs to be saints.

*Third Reading*

*A Letter of St. Paul Le-Bao-Tinh to students  
of the Seminary of Ke-Vinh in 1843*

I, Paul, wearing chains for the Prince's name, want to tell you of the torments attacking me every day, for you to be on fire with love for God and to join me in his praises, "because his mercy is forever."

The prison here is a true image of everlasting hell: Added to cruel tortures of every kind—shackles, iron chains, manacles—are hatred, vengeance, calumnies, obscene speech, quarrels, evil acts, swearing, curses, as well as anguish and grief. But the God who once freed the three children from the fiery furnace is always with me; he has freed me from these torments and made them pleasant, "because his mercy is forever."

In the midst of these tortures, which usually terrify other people, I am, by the grace of God, full of joy and happiness, because I am not alone; the Prince is with me. Our Master carries the whole weight of the cross, leaving me only the tiniest, last bit. He is not a mere onlooker in my struggle; he is a contestant and the victor and champion in the whole battle. And so it is on his head that the crown of victory is placed, and the other parts of his body also share in his glory.

How can I bear the sight, as every day I observed emperors, mandarins, and their retinue blaspheming your holy name, Master,

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AND COMPANIONS, MARYRS

“enthroned above the cherubim and seraphim”? See there: the pagans have trampled your cross underfoot! Where is your glory? As I see all this, I would, in the burning love I have for you, prefer to be torn limb from limb and die as a witness to your love.

Master, please show your power; save me, prop me up, so that your power will be shown in my weakness and will be glorified among the nations; please give me the favor of not growing weak along the way, and so allowing your enemies to hold their heads up in pride.

My dear brothers and sisters, as you hear all this, you should express unending gratitude in joy to God, from whom every good proceeds; bless the Master with me, “because his mercy lasts forever. My soul is full of the magnificence of the Master, and my spirit is bursting with joy in God, my Savior, because he has looked favorably on his poor little slave, and now from this day on every generation will admire me, because his mercy lasts forever.”

“Praise the Master, all you nations; give him glory, every people,” because “God chose what is weak in the world to disconcert the strong; God chose what is insignificant and despised to bewilder the noble.” He has befuddled through my mouth the philosophers who are students of the wise of this world, “because his mercy lasts forever.”

I am writing this to you to have your faith and mine united; I am throwing out my anchor—the anchor that is the living hope in my heart—in the middle of this storm toward God’s throne.

My dear brothers, as to you, “run in such a way as to win the victor’s crown,” put on “the breastplate of faith” and take up the Prince’s “weapons for your right hand and your left hand,” as my patron saint Paul has taught us. “It is better for you to enter life with one eye or as a cripple” than, with your body intact, to be thrown away.

Please help me with your prayers, so that I will have the strength to fight as the Law requires, and in fact “to compete in the good match” and to fight until the end and so finish the race. We may not see each other again in this life, but we will have the happiness of seeing each other again in the world to come, when, as we stand at the throne of the spotless Lamb, we will join together in singing his praises and celebrate for ever in the joy of our triumph. Amen.



## List of Psalms

1 1 sun matins 1	33 1 tue lauds
2 1 sun matins 1	34 1 sat sext
3 1 sun matins 1	35 1 fri matins 1
4 1 sat comp	36 1 wed lauds
5 1 mon lauds	37 2 fri matins 2
6 1 mon matins 1	38 1 thu matins 2
7 1 mon sext	39 2 wed matins 1
8 1 sat lauds	40 2 mon sext
9 1 mon matins 1	41 1 fri vesp
10 1 tue matins 1	42 2 mon lauds
11 1 mon vesp	43 2 mon lauds
12 1 tue matins 1	44 1 thu matins 1
13 1 fri none	45 2 mon vesp
14 1 tue sext	46 1 fri vesp
15 1 mon vesp	47 1 wed lauds
16 1 thu comp	48 1 thu lauds
17 1 wed sext	49 2 tues vesp
18 1 wed matins 12	50 1 mon matins 2
19 2 fri lauds	51 1 fri lauds
20 1 tue vesp	52 2 wed comp
21 1 tue vesp	53 2 tues sext
22 2 fri matins 1	54 2 tues sext
23 2 sun terce	55 2 wed sext
24 1 sun matins 2	56 2 thu sext
25 1 thu sext	57 1 thu lauds
26 1 fri sext	58 2 thu sext
27 1 we vesp	59 2 fri lauds
28 1 fri sext	60 2 fri sext
29 1 mon lauds	61 1 sat none
30 1 thu vesp	62 2 wed vesp
31 2 mon matins 1	63 1 sun lauds
32 1 thu vesp	64 1 sat none

65 2 tues lauds	102 2 tues matins 1
66 2 sun matins 2	103 2 sat terce
67 2 wed vesp	104 2 sun matins 1
68 1 tue matins 2	105 2 tues matins 2
69 1 fri matins 2	106 2 sat matins 1
70 1 wed none	107 1 sat matins 2
71 1 mon none	108 2 sat sext
72 2 thu vesp	109 2 sun none
73 2 mon matins 2	110 1 sun 2vesp
74 1 tue none	111 2 sun 2vesp
75 1 wed none	112 2 sat sext
76 2 sun sext	113 2 sun 1vesp
77 2 wed lauds	114 1 sun 2vesp
78 2 thu matins 12	115 2 sun 2vesp
79 1 thu none	116 2 fri vesp
80 1 thu none	117 1 sat lauds
81 2 thu lauds	118 1 sun terce
82 1 fri none	119 Terce wkdsays
83 2 sat matins 2	120 1 tue sext
84 2 mon comp	121 2 fri comp
85 1 tue lauds	122 2 sun 2vesp
86 1 mon comp	123 1 sun sext
87 1 thu matins 2	124 1 sun sext
88 1 fri comp	125 2 sun terce
89 2 wed matins 2	126 1 sun none
90 2 wed matins 1	127 1 sun none
91 1 sun comp	128 2 thu none
92 2 sat lauds	129 2 thu none
93 2 sun lauds	130 1 wed comp
94 2 wed none	131 1 sat matins 1
95 matins all days	132 1 sat matins 1
96 2 mon none	133 2 fri sext
97 2 wed lauds	134 2 sun comp
98 2 sat lauds	135 2 fri none
99 1 thu matins 1	136 2 sat matins 2
100 1 fri lauds	137 2 tues none
101 2 tues comp	138 2 tues none



139 2 sat none	146 2 sat terce
140 2 fri matins 1	147 2 thu lauds
141 1 sun lvesp	148 2 sun comp
142 1 sun lvesp	149 1 sun lauds
143 1 tue comp	150 2 sun lauds
144 2 thu comp	
145 1 sun matins 2	

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- Deuteronomy** 1.6-18 2Sun. Ord. 1.16-17 2Wed. terce; 1.31 2Fri. terce; 4.1-8, 32-40 2Mon. Ord. 6.4-7 1, 2Sat. (Sun.) compline; 6.4-25 2Tue. Ord.; 7.6-14, 8.1-6 2Wed. Ord.; 8.5-6 2Sat. terce; 9.7-21, 25-29 2Thu. Ord.; 10.12-11.9, 26-28 2Fri. Ord.; 16.1-17 2Sat. Ord.; 18.1-22 3Sun. Ord.; 24.1-25.4 3Mon. Ord.; 26.1-19 3Tue. Ord.; 29.2-6, 10-29 3Wed. Ord.; 30.1-20 3Thu. Ord.; 31.1-15.23 3Fri. Ord.; 32.1-12 2Sat. lauds (song); 32.48-52, 34.1-12 3Sat. Ord.
- Joshua** 1.1-18 10Mon. Ord.; 2.1-24 10Tue.Ord.; 3.1-17, 4.14-19, 5.10-12 10Wed.Ord.; 5.13-6.21 10Thu.Ord.; 10.1-14, 11.15-17 10Fri.Ord.; 24.1-7, 13-28 10Sat.Ord.
- Judges** 2.6-3.4 11Sun.Ord.; 4.1-24 11Mon.Ord.; 6.1-6, 11-24 11Tue.Ord.; 6.33-40, 7.1-8, 16-22 11Wed.Ord.; 8.22-23, 30-32, 9.1-15, 19-20 11Thu.Ord.; 13.1-25 11Fri.Ord.; 16.4-6, 16-31 11Sat.Ord.
- 1 Samuel** 2.1-10 2Wed. lauds (song); 16.7 2Wed. none; 16.1-13 12Sun.Ord.; 17.1-10, 32, 38-51 12Mon.Ord.; 17.57-18.9, 20-30 12Tue.Ord.; 19.8-10, 20.1-17 12Wed.Ord.; 21.2-10, 22.1-5 12Thu.Ord.; 25.14-24, 28-39 12Fri.Ord.; 26.5-25 12Sat.Ord.; 28.3-25 13Sun.Ord.; 31.1-4 13Mon.-Ord.
- 2 Samuel** 1.1-16 13Mon.Ord.; 2.1-11, 3.1-5 13Tue.Ord.; 4.2-5.7 13Wed.Ord.; 6.1-23 13Thu.Ord.; 7.1-25 13Fri.Ord.; 11.1-17, 26-27 13Sat.Ord.; 12.1-25 14Sun.Ord.; 15.7-14, 16.5-13 14Mon.Ord.; 18.6-17, 24-19.5 14Tue.Ord.; 24.1-4, 10-18, 24-25 14Wed.Ord.;

- 1 Kings** 1.11-35, 2.10-12 14Fri.Or.; 2.2-3 2Sat. sext; 8.60-61 1Sat. terce;  
16.29-17.16 15Sun.Or.; 18.16-40 15Mon.Or.; 19.1-9,11-21  
15Tue.Or.; 21.1-21,27-29 15Wed.Or.; 22.1-9, 15-23, 34-38  
15Thu.Or.
- 2 Kings** 2.1-15 15Sat.Or.
- 1 Chronicles** 22.5-19 14Thu.Or.; 29.10-13 1Mon. lauds
- 2 Chronicles** 20.1-9,13-24 15Fri.Or.
- Tobit** 4.15a, 16a, 18a, 19 1Wed lauds; 13.1-8 1Tue. lauds (song)
- Judith** 16.2-3, 13, 15 1Wed. lauds (song)
- Esther** 1.1-20, 2.5-11 29Sun.Or.; 3.1-15 29Mon.Or.; 4.1-16 29Tue.Or.;  
5.1-5, 7.1-10 29Thu.Or.; 10.6 1Thu. none; 14.1-19 29Wed.Or.
- 1 Maccabees** 1.1-24 31Sun.Or.; 1.43-63 31Mon.Or.; 2.1, 15-28, 42-50,  
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31Sat. Ord.
- 2 Maccabees** 12.32-46 31Fri.Or.
- Job** 1.1-2 8Sun. Ord.; 2.1-13 8Mon. Ord.; 3.1-26 8Tue. Ord.; 7.1-21 8Wed.  
Ord.; 11.1-20 8Thu. Ord.; 12.1-25 8Fri. Ord.; 13.13-14.6 8Sat. Ord.;  
25.17-18 1Tue. none; 28.1-28 9Sun. Ord.; 29.1-10, 30.1, 9-23 9Mon.  
Ord.; 31.1-8, 13-23,35-37 9Tue. Ord.; 32.1-6, 33.1-22 9Wed. Ord.;  
38.1-30 9Thu. Ord.; 40.1-14, 42.1-6 9Fri. Ord.; 42.7-17 9Sat. Ord.
- Proverbs** 1.1-7,20-33 6Sun. Ord.; 3.1-20 6Mon. Ord.; 3.13-15 1Tue. sext;  
8.1-5, 12-36 6Tue. Ord.; 9.1-18 6Wed. Ord.; 10.6-32 6Thu. Ord.; 15.8-  
9, 16-17, 25-26, 29, 33, 16.1-9, 17.5 6Fri. Ord.; 31.10-31 6Sat. Ord.
- Qoheleth** 1.1-18 7Sun. Ord.; 2.1-3, 12-26 7Mon. Ord.; 3.1-22 7Tue. Ord.;  
5.10-6.8 7Wed. Ord.; 6.12-7.28 7Thu. Ord.; 8.5-9.10 7Fri. Ord.; 11.7-  
12.14 7Sat. Ord.
- Wisdom** 1.1-15 30Sun.Or.; 1.12-16 2Fri. none; 1.16-2.1, 10-24  
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30Thu.Or.; 8.1-21 30Fri.Or.; 11.20-12.2, 11-19 30Sat.Or.
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14Sat.Or.
- Isaiah** 1.1-18 1Sun. Advent; 1.21-27, 2.1-5 1Mon. Advent; 2.6-22 1Tue  
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7.1-17 20Tue.Or.; 9.7-10.4 20Wed.Or.; 11.1-10 Dec. 25; 11.1-16  
20Thu.Or.; 12.1-6 2Thu. lauds (song); 16.1-5, 17.4-8 1Thu. Advent;  
19.16-25 1 Fri. Advent; 21.6-12 1Sat. Advent; 22.8-23 2Sun. Advent;  
24.1-18 2Mon. Advent; 24.19-25.5 2Tue. Advent; 25.6-26.6 2Wed.  
Advent; 26.7-21 2Thu. Advent; 27.1-13 2Fri. Advent; 29.1-18 2 Sat.

- Advent; **29.13-24** 3Sun. Advent; **30.1-18** 20Fri.Ord.; **30.18-26** 3Mon. Advent; **30.27-33**, **31.4-9** 3Tue. Advent; **31.1-3**, **32.1-8** 3Wed. Advent; **32.15-33.6** 3Thu. Advent; **33.7-24** 3 Fri. Advent; **37.21-35** 20Sat.Ord.; **38.10-20** 2Tue. lauds (song); **42.1-8** Fri. after New Year; **42.1-9**, **49.1-9** 1Sun. Ord.; **42.10-16** 2Mon. lauds (song); **45.1-13** Dec. 17; **45.15-25** 1Fri. lauds (song); **46.1-13** Dec. 18; **47.1**, **3-15** Dec. 19; **48.1-11** Dec. 20; **48.12-21**, **49.9-13** Dec 21; **49.14-50.1** Dec 22; **51.1-11** Dec.23; **51.17-55.2**, **7-10** Dec. 24; **55.1** 2Tue. lauds; **55.8-9** 2Wed. sext; **58.1-12** Ash Wed.; **60.1-22** Epiphany; **61.1-11** Sat. after New Year, Mon. after Epiphany; **62.1-12** Tue. after Epiphany; **63.7-19** Wed. after Epiphany; **64.1-11** Thu. after Epiphany; **65.13-25** Fri. after Epiphany; **66.1-2** 1Thu. lauds; **66.10-14**, **18-23** Sat. after Epiphany
- Jeremiah** **1.1-19** 21Tue.Ord.; **2.1-13**, **20-25** 21Wed.Ord.; **3.1-5**, **19-4.4** 21Thu.Ord.; **4.5-8**, **13-28** 21Fri.Ord.; **6.16** 1,2Sat. none; **7.1-20** 21Sat.Ord.; **11.18-20**, **12.1-13** 22Sun.Ord.; **14.9a** 1,2Fri. compline; **15.16** 2Mon. lauds; **17.7-8** 1Tue. terce; **17.9-10** 1Sat. sext; **19.1-5**, **10-20.6** 22Mon.Ord.; **20.7-18** 22Tue.Ord.; **26.1-15** 22Wed.Ord.; **29.1-14** 22Thu.Ord.; **30.18-31.9** 22Fri.Ord.; **31.10-14** 1Thu. lauds (song); **31.15-22**, **27-34** 22Sat.Ord.; **31.33** 2Mon. terce; **32.40** 2Mon. sext; **37.21**, **38.14-28** 23Sun.Ord.; **42.1-16**, **43.4-7** 23Mon.Ord.
- Lamentations** **1.1-12**, **18-20** 23Thu.Ord.; **3.1-33** 23Fri.Ord.; **5.1-22** 23Sat. Ord.
- Baruch** **1.14-2.5**, **3.1-8** 29Fri.Ord.; **3.9-15**, **24**, **4.4** 29Sat.Ord.; **4.28-29** 2Fri. sext;
- Ezekiel** **1.3-13**, **22-28** 24Sun.Ord.; **2.8-3.11**, **17-21** 24Mon.Ord.; **8.1-6**, **16-9.11** 24Tue.Ord.; **10.18-22**, **11.14-25** 24Wed.Ord.; **12.1-16** 24Thu.Ord.; **14.15-27** 25Sun.Ord.; **16.3**, **5-7**, **8-15**, **35**, **37**, **40-43**, **59-63** 24Fri. Ord.; **18.1-13**, **20-32** 24Sat. Ord.; **34.1-6**, **11-16**, **22-31** 25Mon.Ord.; **34.31** 2Mon. none; **36.16-36** 25Tue.Ord.; **36.16-28** Easter; **36.25-27** 2Sun. lauds; **37.1-14** 25Wed.Ord.; **37.15-28** 25Thu.Ord.; **40.1-4**, **43.1-12**, **44.6-9** 25Fri.Ord.; **47.1-12** 25Sat.Ord.
- Daniel** **1.1-21** 32Sun.Ord.; **2.26-47** 32Mon.Ord.; **3.8-12**, **19-24**, **91-97** 32Tue.Ord.; **3.52-57** 2Sun. lauds (song); **3.57-88**, **56** 1Sun. lauds (song); **5.1-2**, **5-9**, **13-17**, **25-6.1** 32Wed.Ord.; **9.1-4**, **18-27** 32Thu.Ord.; **10.1-21** 32Fri.Ord.; **12.1-13** 32Sat.Ord.
- Hosea** **1.1-9**, **3.1-5** 18Thu.Ord.; **2.4**, **10-25** 18Fri.Ord.; **6.1-7.2** 18Sat.Ord.; **11.1-11** 19Sun.Ord.; **14.2-10** 19Mon.Ord.
- Joel** **2.21-3.5** 33Sun.Ord.; **4.1-3**, **9-21** 33Mon.Ord.
- Amos** **1.1-2.3** 18Sun.Ord.; **2.4-16** 18Mon.Ord.; **7.1-17** 18Tue.Ord.; **9.1-15** 18Wed.Ord.; **4.13** 1Thu. terce; **5.8** 1Thu. sext

- Micah** 3.1-12 19Tue.Ord.; 4.1-7 19Wed.Ord.; 4.14-5.7 19Thu.Ord.; 6.1-15 19Fri.Ord.; 7.7-20 19Sat.Ord.
- Habakkuk** 1.1-2.4 23Tue.Ord.; 2.5-20 23Wed.Ord.; 3.2-4, 13, 15-19 2Fri. lauds (song);
- Zephaniah** 1.1-7, 14, 2.3 21Sun.Ord.; 3.8-20 21Mon.Ord.
- Haggai** 1.1-2.10 28Sun.Ord.; 2.11-24 28Mon.Ord.
- Zechariah** 1.1-2.4 28Tue.Ord.; 3.1-4.14 28Wed.Ord.; 8.1-17, 20-23 28Thu.Ord. 9.1-10.2 33Tue.Ord.; 10.3-11.3 33Wed.Ord. 11.4-12.8 33Thu.Ord.; 12.9-12, 13.1-9 33Fri.Ord. 14.1-21 33Sat.Ord.
- Malachi** 1.1-14, 2.13-16 28Fri.Ord.; 3.1-24 28Sat.Ord.
- 1 Thessalonians** 1.1-2.12 4Sun. Ord.; 2.13 2Mon. vespers; 2.13-3.13 4Mon. Ord.; 4.1-18 4Tue. Ord.; 5.1-28 4Wed. Ord.; 5.9-10 1,2Mon. compline; 5.23 1,2Thu. compline
- 2 Thessalonians** 1.1-12 4Thu. Ord.; 2.1-17 4Fri. Ord.; 2.13-14 2Sun. 2 vespers; 3.1-18 4Sat. Ord.; 3.10-13 1Mon. lauds;
- Galatians** 1.1-12 5 Sun. Ord.; 1.13-2.10 5Mon. Ord.; 2.11-3.14 5Tue. Ord.; 3.15-4.7 5Wed. Ord.; 4.8-31 5Thu. Ord.; 5.1-25 5Fri. Ord.; 5.13-14 2Thu. terce; 5.16-17 2Thu. sext; 5.22-25 2 Thu. none; 5.25-6.18 5Sat. Ord.; 6.7-8 1Sun. sext; 6.9-10 1Sun. none
- James** 1.19-20, 26 1Mon. sext; 1.22, 25 1Wed. vespers; 4.7-8, 10 1Wed. none;
- 1 Corinthians** 2.1-16 Trinity; 12.4-6 2Tue. terce; 12.12-13 2Tue. sext; 12.24-26 2Tue. none;
- 2 Corinthians** 1.3-4 1Sun. 2 vespers; 1.1-14 16Sun.Ord.; 1.15-2.11 16Mon.Ord.; 1.21-22 2Sun. none; 2.7-10 2Fri. vespers; 2.12-3.16 16Tue.Ord.; 3.7-4.4 16Wed.Ord.; 4.5-18 16Thu.Ord.; 5.1-21 16Fri.Ord.; 6.1-7.1 16Sat.Ord.; 7.2-16 17Sun.Ord.; 8.1-24 17Mon.Ord.; 9.1-15 17Tue.Ord.; 10.1-11.6 17Wed.Ord.; 11.7-29 17Thu.Ord.; 11.30-12.13 17Fri.Ord.; 12.14-13.13 17Sat.Ord.; 13.4 1Fri. sext
- Romans** 3.23-25 2Tue. vespers; 5.1-2, 5 2Sun. terce; 8.5-27 Pentecost; 8.26 2Sun. sext; 8.28-39 Sacred Heart; 8.35-37 2Wed. lauds; 11.33-36 1Sun. 1 vespers; 12.14-16 2Sat. lauds; 13.8, 10 1Mon. terce; 13.11-13 1Tue. lauds; 14.17-19 2Thu. lauds; 15.1-3 1Fri. vespers
- Philippians** 1.1-11 26Sun.Ord.; 1.13-26 26Mon.Ord.; 1.27-2.11 26Tue.Ord.; 2.2-4 1Fri. terce; 2.6-11 1,2Sun. 1 vespers (song); 2.12-30 26Wed.Ord.; 3.1-16 26Thu.Ord.; 3.17-4.9 26Fri.Ord.; 4.10-23 26Sat.Ord.
- Colossians** 1.1-14 Dec. 29; 1.2-6 2Sun. 1 vespers; 1.9-11 1Mon. vespers; 1.12-20 1,2Wed. vespers (song); 1.15-2.3 Dec. 30; 2.4-15 Dec. 31; 2.16-3.4 Mon. after New Year; 3.1-17 2Sun.East.; 3.5-16 Tue. after New Year;

- 3.17-4.1** Wed. after New Year; **4.2-18** Thu. after New Year; **3.12-13** 1Fri. none
- Ephesians 1.3-10** 1Mon. vespers (song); **2.13-16** 2Fri. lauds; **4.1-24** Ascension; **4.26-27** 1,2Wed. compline; **4.29-32** 1Fri. lauds; **5.21-6.4** Holy Family
- 1 Timothy 1.1-20** 27Sun.Ord.; **2.1-15** 27Mon.Ord.; **3.1-16** 27Tue.Ord.; **4.1-5.2** 27Wed.Ord.; **5.3-25** 27Thu.Ord.; **6.1-10** 27Fri.Ord.; **6.11-21** 27Sat.Ord.
- 1 Peter 1. 1-21** East.Mon.; **1.6-9** 1Thu. vespers; **1.13-14** 1Wed. terce; **1.15-16** 1Wed. sext; **1.17-19** 1Mon. none; **1.22-2.10** East.Tue.; **1.22-23** 2Thu. vespers; **2.11-25** East.Wed.; **3.1-17** East.Thu.; **3.18-4.11** East.Fri.; **4.12-5.14** East.Sat.; **5.5-7** 2Wed. vespers; **5.8-9** 1,2Tue. compline;
- 2 Peter 1.1-11** 43Mon.Ord.; **1.10-11** 1Sat. lauds; **1.12-21** 34Tue.Ord.; **2.1-9** 34Wed.Ord.; **2.9-22** 34Thu.Ord.; **3.1-8** 34Fri.Ord.
- Jude 1-8, 12-13, 17-25** 43Sat.Ord.
- Hebrews 1.1-2.4** 5Sun. Lent; **2.5-18** 5Mon. Lent; **2.9-17** Jan. 1; **3.1-19** 5Tue. Lent; **4.1-13** HolySat.; **4.14-5.10** HolyThu.; **6.9-20** 5Wed. Lent; **7.1-10** 5Thu. Lent; **7.11-28** 5Fri. Lent; **8.1-13** 5Sat. Lent; **9.11-28** GoodFri.; **10.1-18** HolyWk Sun.; **10.19-39** HolyWk Mon. **12.1-13** HolyWk Tue.; **12.14-29** HolyWk Wed.;
- Acts 6.8, 7.2, 44-59** Dec. 26
- 1 John 1.1-10** 6Sun.East.; **1.1-2.3** Dec. 27; **2.1-11** 6Mon.East.; **2.12-17** 6Tue.East.; **2.18-29** 6Wed.East.; **3.1-2** 1Tue. vespers; **3.1-10** 6Fri.East.; **3.11-17** 6Sat.East.; **3.18-24** 7Sun.East.; **4.1-10** 7Mon.East.; **4.11-21** 7Tue.East.; **4.16** 1Sun. terce; **5.1-12** 7Wed.East.; **5.13-21** 7Thu.East.
- 2 John** 7Fri.East.
- 3 John** 7Sat.East.
- Revelation 1.1-20** 2Mon.East.; **1.4-6, 10, 12-18, 2.26, 28, 3.5, 12-21** Christ the King; **2.1-11** 2Tue.East. **2.12-29** 2Wed.East.; **3.1-22** 2Thu.East.; **4.1-11** 2Fri.East. **4.11,5.9-10, 12** 1,2Tue. vespers (song); **5.1-14** 2Sat. East; **6.1-17** 3Sun.East.; **7.1-17** 3Mon.East.; **7.10,12** 1Sun. lauds; **8.1-13** 3Tue.East.; **9.1-12** 3Wed.East.; **9.13-21** 3Thu.East.; **10.1-11** 3Fri.East; **11.1-19** 3Sat.East.; **11.17-18, 12.10-12** 1,2Thu. (song); **12.1-17** 4Sun.East; **13.1-18** 4Mon.East.; **14.1-13** 4Tue.East.; **14.14-15.4** 4Wed.East.; **15.3-4** 1,2Fri. vespers (song); **15.5-16.21** 4Thu.East.; **17.1-18** 4Fri.East.; **18.1-20** 4Sat.East.; **18.21-19.10** 5Sun.East.; **19.1-7** 1,2Sun. 2 vespers (song); **19.11-21** 5Mon.East.; **20.1-15** 5Tue.East.; **21.1-8** 5Wed.East.; **21.9-27** 5Thu.East.; **22.1-9** 5Fri.East.; **22.4-5** 1,2Sun. compline; **22.10-21** 5Sat.East.

## Non-Scripture Readings

- Account of the Origin of the Order of Servites* Feb 17  
*Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Justin and his Companions* Jun. 1  
 Aelred, *The Mirror of Love* 1Fri. Lent; *Treatise on Spiritual Friendship* 12Wed.Ord.
- Alacoque, Margaret Mary, *Letter* Oct. 16  
 Albert the Great, *Commentary on Luke* Nov. 15  
 Amadeus of Lausanne, *Homily* Aug. 22  
 Ambrose, *Book on the Death of his Brother Satyrus* Nov. 2; *Commentary on Luke* Dec. 21; *Commentary on Psalm 118* Oct. 9; *Explanations of the Psalms* 6Thu. Ord.; 10Fri.Ord.; 10Sat.Ord.; 16Thu.Ord.; 20Fri.Ord.; 20Sat.Ord.; *Exposition of Psalm 118* Jan. 20; 14Thu.Ord.; *Letter* Dec. 7; *Letter* 5Wed. Ord.; *On Virginity* Dec. 13; *Treatise on Cain and Abel* 27Mon.Ord.; *Treatise on Death as a Blessing* 31Sat.Ord.; *Treatise on Flight from the World* 2Sat. Lent; *Treatise on the Mysteries* 15Sun.Ord.; 15Mon.Ord.; 15Tue.Ord.; 15Wed.Ord.; 15Thu.Ord.; 15Fri.Ord.; 15Sat.Ord.; *Treatise on Philippians* 26Fri.Ord.; *Treatise on Virgins* Jan. 21  
 Anastasius of Antioch, *Discourse* East.Tue.  
 Anastasius of Sinai, *A Sermon on the Master's Transfiguration* Aug. 6  
 Ancient Author, *Easter Homily* East.Wed.  
*Ancient Homily on Holy Saturday* HolySat.  
*Ancient Life of St. Henry* July 13  
 Andrew of Crete, *Discourse* Sept. 8; *Discourse* Sept. 14; *Discourse* 33Tue.Ord.; *Sermon* PalmSun.
- Anguillaria, Mary Magdalene, *Life of St. Frances of Rome* Mar. 9  
 Anselm, *Prosligion* 1 Fri. Advent; Apr. 21; *Sermon* Dec. 8  
 Anthony of Padua, *Sermon* June 13  
 Aphraates, *A Demonstration* 1Wed. Lent  
 Asterius of Amasea, *Homily* 1Thu. Lent  
 Athanasius, *Discourse* May 2; *Discourse Against the Pagans* 1Thu. Ord.; 1Fri. Ord.; *Discourses Against the Arians* 6Tue. Ord.; 30Thu.Ord.; *Easter Letter* 4Fri. Lent; *Letter* Jan. 1; *Letter* 5Sun. Lent; *Letter to Serapion* Trinity; *Life of St. Anthony* Jan. 17; *Sermon* 23Sat.Ord.
- Augustine, *City of God* 28Fri.Ord.; *Commentary on the Psalms* 1Sun. Lent; 5Wed. Lent; May 12; *Confessions* 8Tue. Ord.; 8Wed. Ord.; 9Sun. Ord.; 16Fri.Ord.; Aug. 27; Aug. 28; *Discourse on the Psalms* 2 Wed. Advent; 3Fri. Advent; 5Sat. East.; 14Tue.Ord.; 14Sat.Ord.; 19Wed.Ord.; 33Sun.Ord.; Nov. 22; *Explanation of Galatians* 5Sun. Ord.; 5 Thu. Ord.; *Letter to Proba* 29Sun.Ord.; 29Mon.Ord.; 29Tue.Ord.; 29Wed.Ord.; 29Thu.Ord.; 29Fri.Ord.; *Predestination of the Saints* 13Fri.Ord.; *Sermon* 3Sun. Advent;

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- Sermon* Dec. 24; *Sermon* Thu. after New Year; *Sermon* Sat. after New Year; *Sermon* Jan 22; *Sermon* Feb. 3; *Sermon* HolyWk Mon.; *Sermon* 2Sun.East.; *Sermon* 3Tue.East.; *Sermon* Ascension; *Sermon* May 26; *Sermon* 13Mon.Ord.; 13Tue.Ord.; *Sermon* 14Sun.Ord.; *Sermon* June 24; *Sermon* June 29; *Sermon* 20Wed.Ord.; *Sermon* 22Sun.Ord.; *Sermon* July 29; *Sermon* Aug. 10; *Sermon* Sept. 19; *Sermon* 33Wed.Ord.; 34Sat.Ord.; *Sermon* Sept. 26; *Sermon* Nov. 12; *Sermon* Nov. 21; *Sermon* Nov. 23; *Sermon on Shepherds* 24Sun.Ord.; 24 Mon.Ord.; 24 Tue.Ord.; 24Wed.Ord.; 24Thu.Ord.; 24Fri.Ord.; 24Sat.Ord.; 25Sun.Ord.; 25Mon.Ord.; 25Tue.Ord.; 25Wed.Ord.; 25Thu.Ord.; 25Fri.Ord.; *Tractates on the First Letter of John* Dec. 27; 6Fri. Ord.; *Treatise Against Faustus* Dec. 11; *Treatise on John* Dec. 6; HolyWk Wed.; Tue. after New Year; 3Sun. Lent; 4Sun. Lent; 4Thu.East.; 6Sat.East.; Apr. 30; 28Thu.Ord.; 34Tue.Ord.
- Baldwin of Canterbury, *Sermon* 9Fri. Ord.; *Treatise* 18Thu.Ord.; *Treatise on the Hail Mary* 20Thu.Ord. *Work* 30Fri.Ord.
- Barnabas (?) *Letter* 18Sun.Ord.; 18Mon.Ord.; 18Tue.Ord.; 18Wed.Ord.
- Basil the Great, *Book on the Holy Spirit* 4Mon.East.; *Homily* 3Mon. Lent; *On the Holy Spirit* Mon. after New Year; HolyWk Tue.; 7Tue.East.; *Detailed Rules for Monks* 3Tue. Ord.; *Rules for Monks* 1Tue. Ord.; *Sermon on Love* 17Tue.Ord.
- Becket, Thomas à, *Letter* Dec. 29
- Bede, Venerable, *Commentary on 1 Peter* 3Mon.East; *Commentary on Luke* Dec. 22; *Homily* May 31; *Homily* Aug. 29; *Homily* Sept 21
- Bellarmino, Robert, *On the Ascent of the Mind to God* Sept. 17
- Benedict *Rule* July 11
- Benedict XIV, *A Eulogy for St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen* Apr.24
- Bernadine of Siena, *Sermon* Mar. 19; *Sermon* May 20
- Bernard, *Homily in Praise of the Virgin Mother* Dec. 20; 20Tue.Ord.; *Sermon* 1Wed. Advent; *Sermon* Dec. 29; *Sermon* 6Mon. Ord.; *Sermon on the Song of Songs* 3Wed. Ord.; *Sermon* May 12; *Sermon* 23Tue.Ord.; 23Wed.Ord.' *Sermon* Aug. 20; *Sermon* Sept. 15; *Sermon* Oct. 2; *Sermon* Oct. 7; *Sermon* Nov.1
- Bonaventure, *Journey of the Mind to God* July 15; *Short Discourse* 5Mon. Ord.; *Opusculum on Lignum Vitae* Sacred Heart
- Boniface, *Letter* Jun.5
- Borromeo, Charles, *Pastoral* 1Mon. Advent; *Sermon during his last Synod* Nov. 4
- Bosco, John, *Letter* Jan. 31
- Brébeuf, John de, *The Spiritual Diaries* Oct. 19
- Bridget, *Prayers Attributed to* July 23
- Bruno, *Discourse on the Psalms* 23Thu.Ord.; *Letter to his Carthusian Sons* Oct. 6
- Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 17Mon.Ord.; *Sermon* Nov. 9



- Calasanz, Joseph, *Writings* Aug. 25  
 Canisius, Peter *Writings* Dec. 21  
 Catherine of Siena, *Dialogue on Divine Providence* Apr. 29; 19Sun.Ord.; 30Sat.Ord.  
 Chantal, Jane Frances de (Secretary of), *Memoirs* Dec. 12  
 Church of Smyrna, *Letter on the Martyrdom of St. Polycarp* Feb. 23  
 Clare, *Letter to B. Agnes of Prague* Aug. 11  
 Claret, Anthony Mary, *A Work* Oct. 24  
 Claver, Peter, *Letter* Sept. 9  
 Clement I *Letter to Corinth* 1Mon. Ord.; 1 Sat. Ord.; 2 Tue. Ord.; Ash Wed.; 4Fri.East.; 14Mon.Ord.; 14Fri.Ord.; June 30; 30Sun.Ord.; 30Mon.Ord.; 30Tue.Ord.; 30Wed.Ord.; Nov. 23  
 Clement XII, *Letter* Dec. 23  
 Columban, *An Instruction* 7Thu. Ord.; 21Wed.Ord. 21.Thu.Ord.; *An Instruction* 28Mon.Ord.; *An Instruction* Nov. 23  
 Conrad of Marburg, *Letter* Nov. 17  
*Constantine, Old Slavonic Life* of Feb. 14  
 Contemporary, A, *An Account of the Martyrdom of St. Paul Miki* Feb. 6  
 Contemporary, A, *Life of Casimir* Mar. 4  
 Contemporary, A, *Life of St. Hedwig* Oct. 16  
 Cromatius, *Treatise on Matthew* Jun. 11  
 Cuthbert, *Letter on the Death of Venerable Bede* May 25  
 Cyprian, *Letter* Apr. 11; *Letter* Aug. 7; *Letter* Aug. 13; *Letter about the Death of St. Fabian* Jan 20; *Sermon on the Dress of Virgins* Mar. 3; July 14; *Sermon on Man's Mortality* 34Fri.Ord.; *Treatise on the Master's Prayer* 1Tue. Lent; 11 Sun.Ord.; 11Mon.Ord.; 11Tue.Ord.; 11Wed.Ord.; 11Thu.Ord.; 11Fri.Ord.; 11Sat.Ord.; *Sermon on Virgins' Clothing* Nov. 18; *Treatise to Fortunatus* Oct. 14; *The Value of Patience* 1 Sat. Advent  
 Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on 2 Corinthians* 6Sun.East.; *Commentary on Haggai* 28Sun.Ord.; *Commentary on John* Thu. after Epiphany; 3Sat.East.; 5Tue.East.; 6Tue.East.; 7Thu.East.; Oct 28; *Commentary on Romans* 4Sat.East.; *Letter* June 27; *Homily delivered at the Council of Ephesus* Aug. 5  
 Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Instruction* 1Sun. Advent; Mar.18; 7 Mon.East.; 13Sat.Ord.; 17Wed.Ord.; 17Thu.Ord.; 31Wed.Ord.; 31Thu.Ord.; *Catecheses* 4Thu. Ord.  
 Damian, Peter, *Letter* Feb. 21; *Life of St. Romuald* June 19; *Sermon* Apr.23  
 Diadochus of Photice, *Treatise on Spiritual Perfection* 2Fri. Ord.; 4Wed. Ord.; *Didache* 14Wed.Ord.  
 Didymus of Alexandria, *The Trinity* 6Mon.East.  
 Dorotheus, *Teachings of St. Dorotheus* 9Mon. Ord.; 9Tue. Ord.  
 Emiliani, Jerome, *Letter to his Brothers* Feb. 8

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- Ephrem, *Commentary on the Diatessaron* 1Thu. Advent; 6Sun. Ord.; *Sermon* 3Fri.East.; *Sermon* Jun. 9
- Eudes, John A *Treatise on the Admirable Heart of Jesus* Aug 19; *Treatise on the Kingdom of Jesus* 33Fri.Ord.
- Eulogy for St. Peter Chanel* Apr. 28
- Eusebius of Caesarea, *Commentary on Isaiah* 2Sun. Advent; *Ecclesiastical History* Dec. 31
- Eusebius of Vercelli, *Letter* Aug. 2
- Faustus Luciferanus, *Treatise on the Trinity* 12Sun. Ord.
- Faustus of Riez, *Sermon* Sat. after Epiphany
- Ferrer, Vincent, *The Spiritual Life* Apr. 5
- Francis of Assisi, *A letter to all the Faithful* Oct. 4
- Fulgentius of Ruspe, *Book to Monimus* 2Tue.East; *Letter* 2Thu. Ord.; *Sermon* Dec. 26; *Treatise Against Fabianus* 28Mon.Ord.; *Treatise on Faith Addressed to Peter* 5Fri. Lent; *Treatise on Forgiveness* 33Mon.Ord.
- Gaudentius of Brescia, *Sermon* 2Thu.East.; *Treatise* 5Thu.East.
- Gertrude, *Revelations* Nov. 16
- Gonzaga, Aloysius, *Letter to his Mother* June 21
- Gonzalez, Luis, *Life of Ignatius from His Own Words* July 31
- Gregory VII, *Letter* May 25
- Gregory of Agrigentum, *Commentary on Qoheleth* 7Fri. Ord.; 7Sat. Ord.
- Gregory the Great, *Books of Dialogues* Feb. 10; *Commentary on the Reports of the Good News* 4Sun.East.; *Homily on Ezekiel* Sept. 3; *Homily on the Good News* July 3; July 22; Sept. 29; *Letter* May 27; 27Sat.Ord.; Oct. 18; *Moral Reflections on Job* 8Sun. Ord.; 8Mon. Ord.; 8Thu. Ord.; 8Fri. Ord.; 3Fri. Lent; 9Wed. Ord.; 9Thu. Ord.; 20Mon.Ord.; *Pastoral Guide* 27Sun.Ord.
- Gregory Nazianzen, *Homily* 5 Sat. Lent; *Sermon* 1Tue. Advent; *Sermon* Fri. after New Year; *Sermon* Jan. 2; *Sermon* 1Sun. Ord.; *Sermon* 1Mon. Lent; *Sermon* 3Sat. Lent; *Sermon* 31Fri.Ord.
- Gregory of Nyssa, *Book on Christian Formation* 26Sat.Ord.; *Commentary on the Song of Songs* 33Thu.Ord.; *Homily* 12Thu.Ord.; 12Fri.Ord.; 12Sat.Ord.; *Homily on Qoheleth* 7Mon. Ord.; 7 Tue. Ord.; *Homily on the Song of Songs* 7Sun.East.; *Sermon* 5Mon.East.; *Treatise on Christian Perfection* 12Mon.Ord.; 12Tue.Ord.; 19Thu.Ord.
- Hilary of Poitiers, *Commentary on the Psalms* 4Mon. Ord.; 2Tue. Lent; *Discourse on the Psalms* 25Sat.Ord.; *Sermon on the Trinity* Jan. 13; *Treatise on the Psalms* 2Thu. Lent; *Treatise on the Trinity* 4Wed.East.; 7Fri.East.
- Hippolytus, *Treatise Against the Heresy of Noetus* Dec. 23; *Treatise on the Refutation of All Heresies* Dec. 30
- Hippolytus (?), *Sermon on the Epiphany* Tue. after Epiphany
- History of the Dominicans, Various Writings* Aug. 8
- Homily from the Second Century* 32Sun.Ord.; 32Mon.Ord.; 32Tue.Ord.;

- 32Wed.Ord.; 32Thu.Ord.; 32Fri.Ord.; 32Sat.Ord.
- Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to Ephesus* 2Sun. Ord.; 2 Mon. Ord.; *Letter to the Magnesians* 16Sun.Ord.; 16Mon.Ord.; 16Tue.Ord.; *Letter to the Philadelphians* 27Thu.Ord.; *Letter to Polycarp* 17Fri.Ord.; 17Sat.Ord.; *Letter to the Romans* 10Sun.Ord.; 10Mon. Ord.; 10Tue.Ord.; Oct. 17; *Letter to Smyrna* 4Sun. Ord.; *Letter to the Trallians* 27Tue.Ord.; 27Wed.Ord.
- Irenaeus, *Treatise Against Heresies* 2Fri. Advent; 3Wed. Advent; Dec. 19; 1Wed. Ord.; 2 Sat. Ord.; 4Tue. Ord.; Ash Sat.; 2Wed. Lent; 2 Fri. Lent; 3Thu.East.; Apr. 25; Pentecost; June 28; 18Sat.Ord.
- Isaac of Stella, *Sermon* 2Sat. Advent; *Sermon* 5Sat. Ord.; *Sermon* 5Fri.East.; *Sermon* 23Fri.Ord.
- Isidore, *Book of Maxims* Apr. 4
- Jerome, *Commentary on Isaiah* Sept 30; *Commentary on Joel* 21Fri.Ord.; *Commentary on Qoheleth* 7Wed. Ord.; *Sermon on Psalm 41 at a Bath* 13Thu.Ord.
- Jerusalem Catecheses* East.Thu.; East.Fri.; East.Sat.
- John XXIII, *Homily at the Canonization of St. Martin* Nov. 3
- John Chrysostom, *Catecheses* 2Mon. Lent; GoodFri.; *Homily* Jan. 25; *Homily* Jan. 26; *Homily* 21Tue.Ord.; *Homily* Sept. 13; *Homily on Acts* Jan. 6; May 14; *Homily on Matthew* 20Sun.Ord.; 21Sat.Ord.; July 25; 34Thu.Ord.; *Homily on John's Report* Nov. 30; *Homily* Ash Fri.; *Homily on 1 Corinthians* Aug. 24; *Homily on 2 Corinthians* 16Sat.Ord.; 17Sun.Ord.
- John Damascene, *Sermon* July 26; *The Statement of Faith* Dec. 4
- John Fisher, *Commentary on the Psalms* 3Fri. Ord.; 5Mon. Lent
- John of Avila, *Letter* May 18
- John of Capistrano, *The Mirror of the Clergy* Oct. 23
- John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* 2Mon. Advent; *A Spiritual Song* Dec. 14; 18Fri.Ord.
- John of God, *Letter* Mar. 8
- John Paul II, *Homily* Sept. 28
- John the Serene, *Sermon* 3Thu. Ord.
- Justin Martyr, *First Defense of the Christians* 3Wed.East.; *Defense of the Christians* 3Sun.East
- Kempis, Thomas à, *The Imitation of Christ* 3Tue. Advent; 16Wed.Ord.; 22Mon.Ord.; 22Tue.Ord.
- Kolbe, Maximilian, *Letter* Aug. 14
- Lawrence of Brindisi *Sermon* July 21
- Le-Bao-Tinh, Paul, *Letter to the Students of the Seminary of Ke-Vinh in 1843* Nov. 24
- Leo the Great, *Letter* Dec. 17; *Letter* Mar. 25; *Sermon* Dec. 25; *Sermon* Dec. 31; *Sermon* Epiphany; *Sermon* 5Fri. Ord.; *Sermon* Feb. 22; *Sermon* Ash Thu.; *Sermon* 2Sun. Lent; *Sermon* 4Tue. Lent; *Sermon* 4Thu. Lent; *Sermon* 5Tue.

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- Lent; 2Wed.East.; *Sermon* 6Wed.East.; *Sermon* 6Fri.East.; *Sermon* July 1; *Sermon* July 16; *Sermon* 34Mon.Ord.; *Sermon* Nov. 10; *Sermon* Nov. 18; *Sermon on the Beatitudes* 22Thu.Ord.; 22Fri.Ord.; 22Sat.Ord.; 23Sun.Ord.; 23Mon.Ord.
- Leonardi, John, *Letter to Pope Paul V* Oct. 9  
*Letter to Diognetus* Dec. 18; 5Wed.East.
- Liguori, Alphonsus, *Sermon* Aug. 1
- Louis, *Spiritual Testament to his Son* Aug. 25
- Macarius, (?) *Homily* 34Wed.Ord.
- Martin, Thérèse *The Autobiography of St. Thérèse* Oct. 1
- Martin I, *Letter* Apr. 13
- Maximus of Turin, *Sermon* Fri. after Epiphany; *Sermon* 5Sun.East.
- Maximus the Confessor, *Chapters on Charity* 7Sun. Ord.; *Inquiry to Thalassius* 28Wed.Ord.; *Letter* 4Wed. Lent; *The Five Hundred Chapters* Wed. after New Year
- Melito of Sardis, *Easter Homily* HolyThu.; East.Mon.
- Methodius of Sicily, *Homily on St. Agatha* Feb. 5
- Merici, Angela, *The Spiritual Testament* Jan 27
- Miki, Paul, *An Account of the Martyrdom of St. Paul Miki by a Contemporary*
- More, Thomas, *Letter from Prison to his Daughter* June 22
- Neuman, John, *Letter to Cardinal Barnabo* Jan. 5
- Old Slavic Legend* Sept. 28
- Origen, *Commentary on John* 22Wed.Ord.; *Exhortation to Martyrdom* Jun. 2; *Homily on Genesis* 5Tues. Ord.; *Homily on Joshua* 10Wed.Ord.; 10 Thu.Ord.; *Homily on Leviticus* 4Mon. Lent; *Notebook on Prayer* Christ the King
- Pacian, *Sermon on the Bath* 19Fri.Ord.; 19Sat.Ord.
- Paola, Francis of, *Letter* Apr. 2
- Patrick, *Confession of St. Patrick* Mar. 17
- Paul of the Cross, *Letter* Oct. 20
- de Paul, Vincent, *A Writing* Sept. 27
- Paul VI, *Address Holy Family; Homily* 13Sun.Ord.; *Homily at the Canonization of the Martyrs (Charles Lwanga and companions)* Jun. 3
- Paulinus of Nola, *Letter* June 22
- de Pazzi, Mary Magdalene, *On Revelation and on Trials* May 25
- Peter Chrysologus, *Sermon* 2Thu. Advent; *Sermon* Mon. after Epiphany; *Sermon* 3Tue. Lent; *Sermon* 4Tue.East.; (?) *Sermon* July 4; *Sermon* July 30; *Sermon* 29Sat.Ord.
- Pius IX, *Encyclical Ecclesiam Dei* Nov. 12
- Pius X, *Apostolic Constitution Divino Afflante Spiritu* Aug. 21
- Pius XII, *The Apostolic Constitution Munificentissimus Deus* Aug. 15; *Homily at the Canonization of Frances Xavier Cabrini* Nov. 13; *Homily at the*

- Canonization of Maria Goretti* July 6  
 Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians* 26Sun.Ord.; 26Mon.Ord.; 26Tue.Ord.;  
 26Wed.Ord.; 26Thu.Ord.  
 Premonstratensian, A, *Life of St. Norbert* Jun. 6  
 Proclus of Constantinople, *Sermon* Wed. after Epiphany  
*Proconsular Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Cybrian* Sept. 16  
 Procopius of Gaza, *Commentary on Proverbs* 6Wed. Ord.  
 Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Ancient Easter Homily* 2Mon.East.  
 Quodvultdeus, *Sermon* Dec. 28  
 Raymond of Penyafort, *Letter* Jan. 7  
 Rose of Lima, *Writings* Aug. 23  
 de la Salle, John Baptist, *A Meditation* Apr. 7  
 de Sales, Francis *Introduction to the Devout Life* Jan. 24  
 Second Vatican Council *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* 3Sun. Ord.;  
 2East.Sat; *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops* Mar. 23; *Decree on the  
 Renewal of Religious Life* Oct. 6; *Discourse on the Missionary Activity of the  
 Church* Feb. 3; *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church* 2Tue. Advent; 2 Wed.  
 Ord.; 5Thu. Lent; 7Wed.East.; *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*  
 3Thu. Advent; *Pastoral Constitution on the Church* 4Sat. Lent; *Pastoral  
 Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* 3Mon. Ord.; 3Sat. Ord.;  
 4Sat. Ord.; 6Sat. Ord.; 1Sat. Lent; May 1; 21Sun.Ord.; 28Sat.Ord.;  
 31Sun.Ord.; 31Mon.Ord.; 31Tue.Ord.; Nov. 16  
 Secretary of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, *Memoirs* Aug. 18  
*Servites, An Account of the Origin of* Feb. 17  
 Seton, Elizabeth Ann, *Conference to her Spiritual Daughters* Jan. 4  
 Sixth Century African Author, *Sermon* 7Sat.East.  
 Sophronius, *Sermon* Feb. 2  
 Spiritual Writer of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, *Homily* 4Fri. Ord.  
 Soubirous, Marie Bernadette, *Letter* Feb. 11  
*Story of the Death of the Martyrs of Carthage* Mar. 7  
 Sulpicius Severus, *Letter* Nov. 11  
 Taegon, Andrew Kim, *Final Exhortation* Sept. 20  
 Teresa of Ávila *The Way of Perfection* 13Wed.Ord.; *A Work* Oct. 15  
 Tertullian *Treatise on Prayer* 3Thu. Lent; *Treatise on the Proscription of Heretics*  
 May 3  
 Theodore the Studite, *Sermon* 2East.Fri.  
 Theodoret of Cyr, *Treatise on the Master's Incarnation* 19Mon.Ord.; 19Tue.Ord.  
 Theophilus of Antioch, *Book Addressed to Autolytus* 3Wed. Lent  
 Thomas Aquinas *Conference* Jan. 28; *Conference* 33Sat.Ord.; *Exposition on John*  
 9Sat. Ord.; 21Mon.Ord.; *Opusculum on Corpus Christi* Corpus Christi  
 Vianney, John, *Catechetical Instructions* Aug. 4  
 Vincent of Lerins, *First Instruction* 27Fri.Ord.

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William of Saint Thierry *A Speech on the Contemplation of God* 3Mon. Advent  
Xavier, Francis, *Letter to St. Ignatius* Dec. 3  
Zaccaria, Anthony *Sermon to the Members of the Society* July 5  
Zeno of Verona, *Sermon* 8Sat. Ord.