

Adoration of the Lamb vaneyck-ghent-stbavon

Introduction:

God created us to live with Him forever in Heaven. Adam rejected that plan and God sent His Son, who became flesh, Jesus Christ, and suffered and died to redeem us. He rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven. We, who are united to Him in His Mystical Body, the Church, on Earth, are meant to join Him in Heaven forever if we remain united to Him and do not separate ourselves from Him by mortal sin.

Those who have lived and died in God's grace are in Heaven and are called "Saints". The word means "the ones who are holy". Everyone in Heaven is a Saint. Some people who have made it to Heaven are particularly honored by the Church (they have been "canonized", that is, been added to the list of those who are in Heaven). These Saints are not only honored because of God's work in them, but also because they are good examples for us.

This program this year is going to look at the history of the Catholic Church from the time of Jesus until today by studying the lives of some of the more important Saints.



John the Baptist (Domenico Ghirlandaio – Preaching of St John the Baptist)

John was the last of the prophets and the herald of the Messiah. He is an example of a life of penance and called the Jews to repentance, which is the first part of the proclamation of the Gospel. John was baptizing in the Jordan River which was the eastern boarder of Palestine, the Promised Land. His baptism was a baptism of repentance, which was not necessary for Jesus, although Jesus did want to be baptized by John because He was bringing all of our humanity with Him to His Baptism. Cf. Matthew 3: 13 et seq.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Whom we honor in St. John the Baptist; pour forth upon Your people the grace of spiritual joys, and direct the souls of all Your faithful into the way of eternal salvation. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: the Sacrament of Baptism (CIC qq. 30, 34 and appendix A)



2. Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Gabriel (pp. 11, 28)

FEAST: March 25
September 29 or
March 24 (Trad.)

God sent the Archangel St. Gabriel to ask the Blessed Virgin Mary to become the mother of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Mary accepts God's invitation and Jesus is conceived in her by the Holy Spirit. St. Gabriel tells Mary that the baby's name is going to be "Jesus", which means "God saves". (St. Luke 1: 26-38)

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who willed that Your Word should take flesh at the message of the angel Gabriel, in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, grant that those who pray to You, believing her to truly be the Mother of God, may be aided by You through her intercession. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: the 2nd Commandment (CIC qq. 49, 50; appendix B)



3. St. Joseph (p. 25)

FEAST DAY: March 19

May 1 (Workman)

3rd Wednesday after Easter

(Patron of the Universal
Church) (Trad.)

Our blessed Mother was married to St. Joseph, a craftsman, who was faithful to God. God chose him to be father of Jesus. Jesus was obedient to Joseph and Mary like all children ought to be obedient to their parents. Cf. St. Matthew 1: 20-21, 25; St. Luke 2: 4-7, 23-24, 33, 39-40; St. Matthew 2: 13-23; St. Luke 2: 41-50. From *Joseph, the Patron for Catholic Men (Bowlin)*:

St. Joseph's fatherhood is not biological, yet no less real on account of it: "In this family, Joseph is the father: his fatherhood is not one that derives from begetting offspring; but neither is it an "apparent" or merely "substitute" fatherhood. Rather, it is one that fully shares in authentic human fatherhood and the mission of a father in the family."¹ Indeed, "[a]n exclusively biological concept of fatherhood belongs to the animal realm."²

OPENING PRAYER: We beg You, O Lord, that we may be helped by the merits of St. Joseph, the spouse of Your holy Mother, so that what we cannot obtain for ourselves, may be given to us through his intercession. Who lives and reigns, forever and ever. Amen.

LESSON: the 4th Commandment
(CIC qq. 33, 49, 50; appendix B)

¹ *Redemptoris Custos*, 21

² *Joseph of Nazareth*, p. 157



4. St. Tarcisius (p. 75) (3rd Century)

FEAST: August 15

In the Church, there are different levels of ministers: deacons, priests and bishops. There are also some other ministers, who are not ordained, but who are given a special ministry, such as acolytes. Tarcisius was one who helped the ordained ministers perform their roles in making the people of God holier.

OPENING PRAYER: Grant, we beg You, O almighty God, that we who celebrate blessed Tarcisius, Your martyr, may by his intercession be strengthened in the love of Your name and reverence for the most Blessed Sacrament. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON:

Holy Eucharist

(CIC qq. 37-41, and appendices E & F)



Right: Mural of St. George at a Restaurant in Bethlehem

5. Sts. Sebastian (p. 14)(c. AD 288) & George (p. 34) (c. 303)

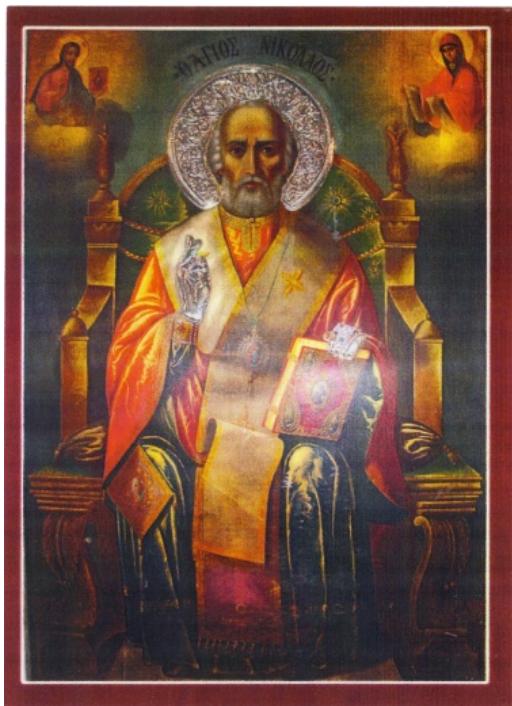
FEASTS: January 20
April 23

The Catholic Church began to spread with the preaching of the Twelve Apostles (Peter, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon, and Jude). Many people began to follow Jesus throughout the Roman Empire. But the Roman Emperors treated themselves like gods and wanted the people to worship them along with all the other Roman gods. Christians could not do this and many of the Emperors decided to kill the Christians because they could not control them.

Both Saints George and Sebastian were soldiers in the Roman Empire who became Christians and were eventually killed because they told the government that what they were doing was wrong. St. Sebastian is often shown shot with arrows, but he did not actually die from those wounds. A Christian woman nursed him back to health and he went back to preaching Christ. Eventually, he was beheaded.

OPENING PRAYER: Mercifully look on our weakness, O almighty God; since the weight of our own sins weighs us down, may the glorious intercession of your martyrs Sebastian and George be our protection. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Rite of Penance (CIC qq. 35; appendices B & C)



**6. St. Nicholas [of Bari, Bishop of Myra]
(p. 111) (4th Century)**

FEAST: December 6

God ordains some men to be deacons, priests and bishops. They are given authority and power to do things to help people follow the will of God and come closer to Him. There are things that a priest can do that a deacon cannot and there are things that bishops can do that deacons and priests cannot. One of the things that priests can do but is normally only done by Bishops is to administer the sacrament of Confirmation. The sacrament of Confirmation is special because:

- 1) the Holy Spirit comes to us in a more complete way;
- 2) we are given strength in order to better live our faith, especially when other people try and stop us, as soldiers of Christ.

St. Nicholas was a bishop who also fought against those people who wanted to teach that Jesus was not God. He was also very generous to the poor and that is why his story became what we know today as Santa Claus.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, who worked countless miracles by Your holy Bishop Nicholas; grant, we beg You, that by his merits and prayers we may be delivered from the flames of Hell. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Hierarchy &
Sacrament of Confirmation
(CIC qq. 26, 36; appendix D)



7. St. Patrick (p. 24) (c. AD387-461)

FEAST: March 17

There is only one God, and He is the only one that we should worship. We can not have “false gods”. The Catholic Church, started by Jesus through the Apostles in Jerusalem, and commissioned to make disciples of all nations, began to spread. Most Christians lived around the Mediterranean Sea. Those who went out and worked to bring salvation to the rest of the world were known as *missionaries*.

St. Patrick was originally from Scotland but was made into a slave and sold to a place that is today known as Ireland. After he escaped, he came back to Ireland to teach them about the one, true God.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who did graciously grant to send blessed Patrick, confessor and bishop, to preach Your glory to unbelievers, grant that, through his merits and intercession, we may be able to accomplish what You command us to do. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: First Commandment (CIC qq. 49, 50; appendix B)

CLOSING PRAYER: Act of Faith



8. St. Benedict (p. 26) (AD480-547) FEAST: July 11
March 21 (Trad.)

Context: After most of Europe was Christian, communities of men and women were founded to allow them to spend their time dedicated to God. St. Anthony was the “father” of eastern monasticism in the early days of the Church. The founder of western monasticism was St. Benedict. His motto was *Ora et Labora* (pray and work). Benedict’s sister, Scholastica, also founded an order of religious women.

The devil did not like the holiness of Benedict and tried very hard to stop his work. Because of St. Benedict’s ability to stop the devil’s attacks, he is a Saint who we can pray to when we are attacked by the devil.

OPENING PRAYER: May the intercession of the blessed abbot Benedict, we beg You, O Lord, commend us to You, that what we cannot have through our own merits we may obtain through his patronage. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Spiritual Combat

CLOSING PRAYER: St. Michael



The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ and is made up of all the Saints in Heaven (the Church triumphant), the souls in Purgatory (the Church suffering), and those who are united to Jesus in His Church on Earth through Baptism and the true faith, fighting for their salvation (the Church militant). Because the Church on Earth needs organization, Jesus established the priesthood with its three levels: deacons, priests and bishops. The head of the Church militant is the Bishop of Rome, the Pope. They have the responsibility of guiding the Church on Earth so that the flock will be ready to join the Saints in Heaven. One of our great popes was St. Gregory the Great.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who did bestow upon the soul of Your servant Gregory the rewards of eternal happiness; mercifully grant, that we who are oppressed by the weight of our sins, may be relieved through his intercession. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Ecclesiology (CIC qq. 24-25)

CLOSING PRAYER: For the Pope



10. St. Isidore the Farmer (p. 27) (AD1070-1130)

FEAST: May 15
Mar 22 (Trad.)

The third commandment tells us that we have to treat Sunday different from every other day of the week. (Ex 20: 8-11) This means that we don't do any "unnecessary servile work", but also that, unless we absolutely cannot, assist at Holy Mass. But even though the minimum requirement is to assist at Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, if we really love God, we will want to attend Mass as often as we can, especially to be united with Him in Holy Communion. St. Isidore worked very hard on the farm of another man, but he always made a point of going to Holy Mass every day.

Even if we cannot assist at the Holy Sacrifice and receive Holy Communion, we can make what is called a "Spiritual Communion".

OPENING PRAYER: Grant us, we beg You, O merciful God, by the intercession of Your blessed confessor Isidore, the farmer, to overcome any feelings of pride; and by his merits and example to serve You with that humility in which You take pleasure. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Third Commandment (CIC qq. 48, 49; appendix B)

CLOSING PRAYER: Spiritual Communion



**11. St. Francis of Assisi
(AD1181-1221) (p. 91)**
St. Dominic (AD1170-1221) (p. 70)

Feasts: October 4
August 8
(Trad. Aug 4)

Francis and Dominic both lived around the same time. They are both founders of religious orders which are commonly called after them (although the Franciscans are actually the OFMs – the Order of Friars Minor (AD1209) and the Dominicans are the OPs – the Order of Preachers). Francis had a special emphasis on service of the materially poor. He also helped St. Clare of Assisi found the order of the Poor Clares.

Dominic had a special emphasis on the service of the spiritually poor. He fought tirelessly against the Albigensian heresy in the south of France and was a great promotor of the Holy Rosary.

Francis was eventually ordained a Deacon and Dominic was a priest. Both men were members of religious *orders* as well. We commonly call those who are members of these orders as *religious* or *consecrated religious*. We call religious monks or brothers (for men) or sisters or nuns (for women).

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who by the merits and teachings of blesseds Dominic and Francis, Your confessors, has been pleased to enlighten Your Church and enrich her with new offspring: grant that through his prayers she may not be deprived of temporal help, and may continually advance in spiritual growth and, despising the things of this world, may ever rejoice in sharing of Your heavenly gifts. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Religious Life and Vocations

CLOSING PRAYER: To Know one's Vocation



12. St. Clare of Assisi (p. 73) (AD1194-1253)

FEAST: August 11
August 12 (Trad.)

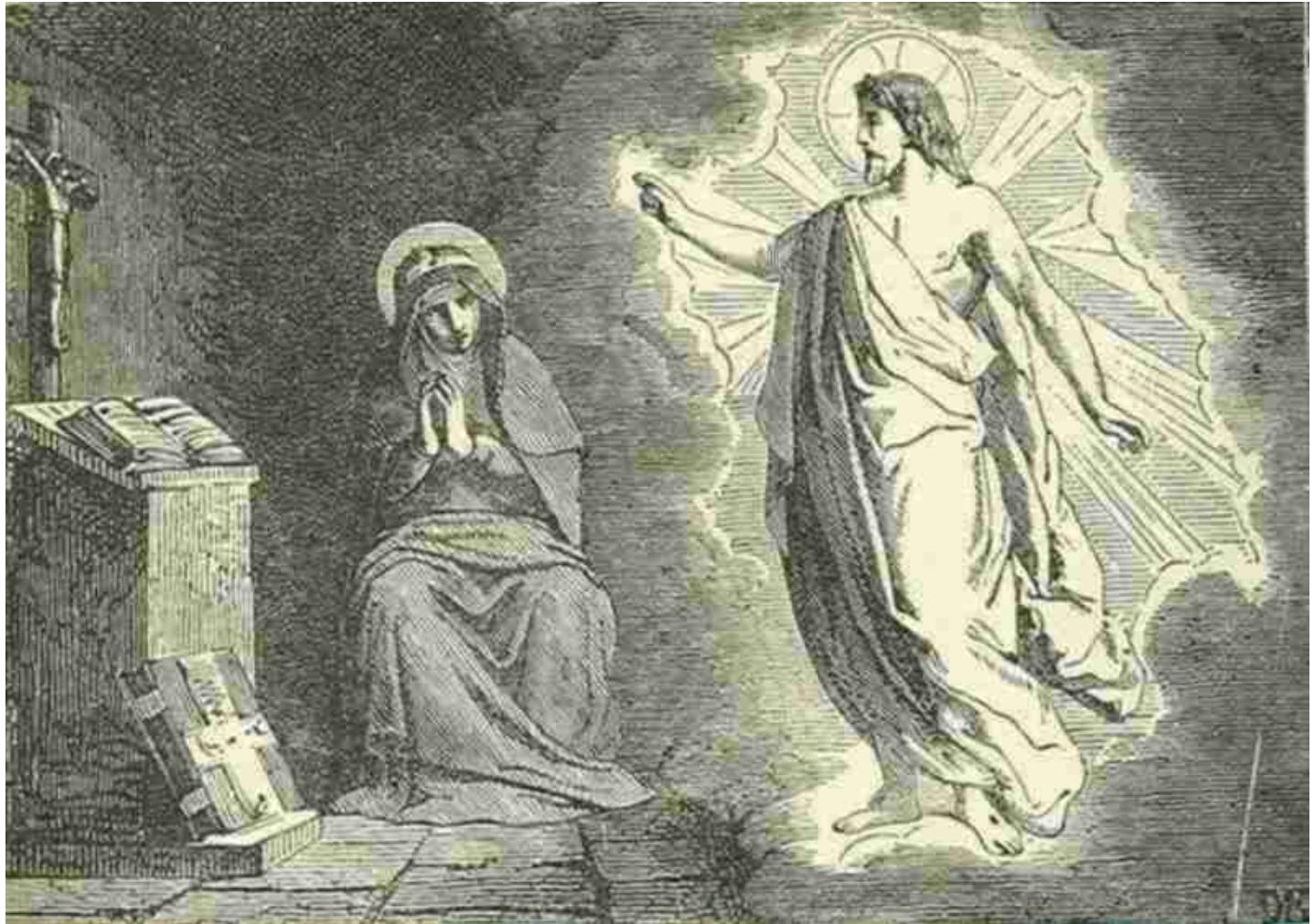
It was not only men who founded religious orders. Clare is a wonderful example of how women also became mendicants.³ They lived lives of prayer and working for the needs of others. Their strength was the Sacraments, especially the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

³ A mendicant is a beggar. “**MENDICANT FRIARS.** Members of religious orders who are forbidden to own property in common, are therefore required to work or beg for their living, and are not bound to one monastery by a vow of stability. Originally the name was restricted to the Franciscans and Dominicans. Later on the name and privileges were extended to the Carmelites (1245), the Hermits of St. Augustine (1256), and the Servites (1424). Other orders received the same title later on. According to the Church law, mendicant friars are allowed to beg for alms where their houses are located, given the permission of their own superiors. In other places they must also obtain the permission of the bishop of the diocese. (Etym. Latin *mendicus*, beggar; and infirm, wretched, miserable person.)” from Fr. John Hardon’s *Modern Catholic Dictionary* <http://www.therealpresence.org/dictionary/dictaintro.htm>

One of the ways that God gives power to His Church is through the prayers of the People of God, but especially the prayers of those who have dedicated themselves to the consecrated life. St. Clare was ill for 28 years and her strength was the Holy Eucharist. The same goes for all of us and with all the Sacraments. Sacraments are “outward signs, instituted by Christ to give grace”. Prayer and Sacraments are how God normally gives us grace. Each of the Sacraments has particular graces that help us in some way.

OPENING PRAYER: Hear us, O God, our Saviour; that as we rejoice in blessed Clare of Assisi, Your virgin, se we may be instructed in the affection of pious devotion. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Sacraments in General (CIC qq. 30-33)



13. St. Bridget of Sweden (p. 92) (AD1304-1373)

FEAST: July 23
October 8 (Trad.)

We can follow God as a priest or a consecrated religious (monk, brother, sister, or nun), but most people follow God as a married person, a husband or wife, mother or father. The family is God's way of creating more people to enjoy Heaven with Him and making sure that their bodies and souls are taken care of.

The family is the domestic Church. The parents (but especially the father) is like the priest. In a Catholic home, the family should pray together regularly, just as the parish family gathers to pray together. The family is supposed to be the support for each other, materially and spiritually and emotionally.

St. Bridget is known for her devotion to the Passion of our Lord. From her prayers on the Passion of our Blessed Lord (n. 12): *O Jesus! I remember the multitude of Wounds which afflicted You from Head to Foot, torn and reddened by the spilling of Your Precious Blood. O great and universal pain which You suffered in Your Flesh for love of us! What is there You could have done for us which You have not done? May the fruit of Your sufferings be renewed in my soul by the faithful remembrance of Your Passion and may Your love increase in my heart each day until I see You in eternity, You Who are the treasury of every real good and joy, which I beg You to grant me in Heaven. Amen.*

OPENING PRAYER: O Lord our God, who through Your only-begotten Son, did reveal secrets of heaven to blessed Bridget; grant, through her loving intercession, that we, Your servants, may rejoice with gladness at the revelation of Your eternal glory. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Holy Matrimony and the Family
 (CIC qq. 33, 49, 50)



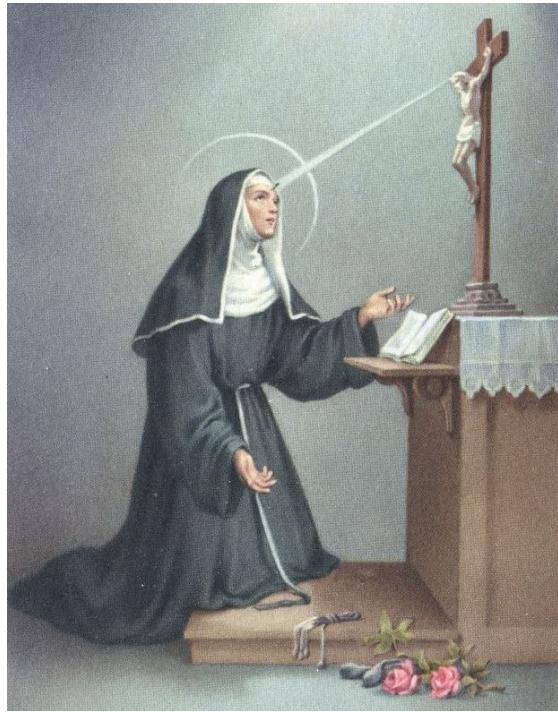
14. St. Joan of Arc (p. 49) (AD1412-1431) FEAST: May 30

God has commanded that we not kill. Specifically, this means that we cannot take innocent life. That does not mean that we cannot hurt or kill someone in self-defence. This especially applies to our families and, more generally, to our country. If someone is trying to kill us or our loved-ones, we can take action. This is why it is not a sin to be soldier and why Joan was made a general in the French army.

Normally, we must bear with injustices and not retaliate in anger. The fifth commandment also applies to hurting someone physically unjustly or hurting someone emotionally. Our words to someone or about them can be painful and cause great damage as well.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who raised up in a wonderous manner blessed Joan the virgin to defend the faith and her country; grant, we beg You, that through her intercession, Your Church, having overcome the snares of her enemies, may enjoy unbroken peace. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Fifth Commandment
(CIC, qq. 49-50; appendix B)



15. St. Rita of Cascia (p. 46) (AD1381-1457)
May 22

FEAST:

After the Last Supper, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane and began His Agony and Passion. He suffered in His heart and in His body more than anyone who ever lived and will ever live. Because we are part of Christ's Mystical Body in the Church, He participates in our suffering and we

participate in His (cf. Col 1: 24). St. Rita participated in a special way in Jesus' suffering through the wound in her forehead.⁴

Because Christ is with us in our suffering, we can get His help when we are suffering and are in danger of death. There is a special Sacrament called the Anointing of the Sick which priests can give us that asks God to heal us, but, more importantly, asks for the special grace of strength to suffer with Jesus and be ready for Heaven.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who to Saint Rita did graciously grant the great grace of very truth to love her enemies, and both to her heart and on her brow to bear the stigmata of Your passion: have regard, we beg You, to her merits and prayers; and grant that we may in the same way show mercy to our enemies, and so meditate on the pains of Your passion, as to make our own the blessedness promised to those who are meek and mourn. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Anointing of the Sick (CIC qq. 33)

CLOSING PRAYER: Anima Christi

⁴ A wound like Christ's miraculously received is called the *stigmata*. The wound on her forehead emitted a terrible stench until the day she died, when it began to smell beautifully.



16. St. Ignatius of Loyola (p. 68) (AD1491-1556)

FEAST: July 31

All Christians are Soldiers of Christ. We are in a fight against sin and the Devil, fighting to get as many souls to Heaven as possible. In our Army, Jesus is the King/Commander and St. Michael is the general. Priests are the captains: they teach us what we need to know and direct us to victory. At the time of the Protestant revolt, the Church responded by holding a Council of Bishops from all over the world to make sure that the teachings of the Church were very clear. They also allowed a man named Ignatius from Loyola, Spain, to start an order called the Society of Jesus. They were founded in order to combat the rebellion of the Protestants.

St. Ignatius was a priest. This means that he was ordained to bring people to God, specifically through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, but also through the other Sacraments (such as Penance) and in their teaching. While Ignatius had a specific role of bringing people back to God who had become Protestant, all priests share this role. Jesus works in a special way through deacons, priests and bishops that He doesn't work through other people.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, who for the spreading of the greater glory of Your name, did, by means of blessed Ignatius, strengthen Your Church militant with a new army; grant that by his aid and by his example, we may so fight on earth as to become worthy to be crowned with him in Heaven. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Holy Orders (CIC qq. 33)

CLOSING PRAYER: To know one's vocation



17. St. Juan Diego (p. 139) (AD1478-1548) FEAST: December 9

At the time of the Protestant rebellion, when many people were leaving the Catholic Church, our Blessed Mother appeared in Mexico and converted more people to Jesus and His Catholic Church. Mary appeared to St. Juan Diego in what we call Mexico City. She sent him to ask the bishop to build a church in her honor. She performed several miracles during these apparitions, including leaving an image of herself on the tilma (a kind of poncho) that Juan Diego was wearing.

Perhaps the most beautiful thing that our Blessed Mother says to Juan Diego during her apparition was: “Am I not here, who am your mother?” Juan Diego was worried about his sick uncle, but Mary reminded Juan Diego that she would take care of us. Because she is the mother of Jesus, she is also our mother.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who by means of Saint Juan Diego showed the love of the most holy Virgin Mary for your people, grant, through his intercession, that, by following the counsels our Mother gave at Guadalupe, we may be ever constant in fulfilling Your will. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Apparitions of Guadalupe and Devotion to our Lady
(CIC, qq. 20, 21, 45)



**18. St. Teresa of Avila (p. 94)
(AD1515-1582)**

FEAST: October 15

Prayer is “the elevation of the heart and mind to God”. Along with the Sacraments, it is the way in which we are connected to God. Prayer is a part of our relationship with Him. It is how we “talk” to Him. We could

not have a good relationship with anyone if we do not stay in contact with him. The same can be said of our relationship with God. Imagine if we had a friend who we could call or text at any time, day or night, but we only did it once a week?

St. Teresa of Avila became a Carmelite so that she could pray all the time. Even though not all of us are called to the religious life, all of us are called to a relationship with God and that requires regular prayer. It is so important that we learn how to pray well in whatever state in life we find ourselves, whether we are priests or consecrated religious or still single.

OPENING PRAYER: Graciously hear us, O God our Saviour; that as we rejoice in Your holy virgin Teresa, so we may be fed with the food of her heavenly teaching and grow in loving devotion towards You. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Prayer (CIC qq. 24, 42-46; appendix G)



19. St. Vincent de Paul (p. 63) (AD1581-1660)

FEAST: September 27
July 19 (Trad.)

God provides for us and sometimes some people do not have enough to eat or clothes to wear or a house to live in. When that happens, God works through us to help these people. We have to respect other people's property and we have to share what we have with those who need it. Material things are not the most important thing in the world, and so we should not make money or material stuff a goal.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who, for the preaching of the Gospel to the poor and for promoting the honour of the priesthood, did strengthen blessed Vincent with the zeal of an apostle; grant, we humbly pray, that we who venerate his holy life, may profit by the examples of virtue he left us. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON:

Seventh & Tenth Commandments
(CIC qq. 49, 50; appendix B)

CLOSING PRAYER: Act of Charity

**20. St. Isaac Jogues (p. 87)
(AD-1644) &
St. Kateri Tekakwitha (p. 135)
(AD1656-1680)**

FEASTS: October 19 /
September 26 (Trad.)
July 14

Context: Remember the Jesuits and missionaries.

Humans want to be comfortable and to have things their own way. We like things that are pleasurable. Pleasure is not a bad thing, but seeking pleasure as a goal in life is very evil. Part of this is because the most important things in life are uncomfortable or painful. When we love, we are willing to suffer more.

Saint Isaac Jogues was a great Saint who loved souls and wanted them to know Jesus Christ. He risked his life to come preach to the native Indians

in America. He offered himself so that they could be saved and he was eventually killed because of it.

One of the fruits of St. Isaac Jogues martyrdom was St. Kateri (Catherine) Tekakwitha. She understood that suffering, when it was united to Christ on the Cross, was a good thing, and could be offered to win grace for souls that needed it. Kateri chose suffering, both emotional and physical, because of her love of God (see quote).

We also need to accept suffering and sometimes even look for it so that our souls may be less attached to this world and free to love God. We can also offer this suffering for those who need God's grace.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, who made holy the first fruits of the faith in the northern regions of America by the preaching and blood of Your blessed martyr, Isaac, grant, in Your mercy, that through his intercession, and the intercession of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, the plentiful harvest of the faithful may increase everywhere from day to day, so that from every nation, tribe and tongue, we may magnify You in a single canticle of praise.. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Moral Law (CIC qq. 12-14, 48, 50; appendix B)



**21. St. Margaret Mary Alacoque
(p. 96) (AD1647-1690)**

FEAST: October 16
October 17 (Trad.)

Because God wanted to be closer to us, Jesus, Who is God, also takes a human nature so that He is like everything (except sin; cf. Heb 4: 15; Jn 1: 14). That means He also has a human heart that loves like we do. He loves us as God and He loves us as Man. Jesus has asked some people to let as many people as possible know about His love. One of the people who worked especially hard to let everyone know about the love of Jesus, symbolized by His Sacred Heart, was St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. It is thanks to her and those who worked with her devotion to Jesus' Sacred Heart became popular.

OPENING PRAYER: O Lord Jesus Christ, Who in a wonderful manner revealed to the blessed virgin Margaret the unsearchable riches of Your heart; grant us, through her merits and example, that we may love You in all things and above all things, and become worthy to dwell within Your heart for evermore. Who lives and reigns, forever and ever. Amen.

LESSON: Incarnation/Christology (CIC qq. 15-19)
Mysteries of the Rosary: Joyful (q. 22)



22. St. Dominic Savio (p. 40) (AD1842-1857) FEAST: March 9

God created us to know, love and serve Him in this life and to be happy with Him in Heaven. Because of Adam's Sin, human beings die. Jesus has told us that after we die, we will be judged and we will go to Heaven or we will go to Hell (cf. Mt 25: 31 et seq.). We have to always be ready for death because we never know when God will be calling us home. (Mt 25: 13)

St. Dominic Savio was a holy young man who died when he was 15 years old. His four rules show us the most basic things that we should do to prepare for death:

1. I will go to Confession often, and as frequently to Holy Communion as my confessor allows.
2. I wish to sanctify the Sundays and festivals in a special manner.
3. My friends shall be Jesus and Mary.
4. Death rather than sin.

OPENING PRAYER: Oh God, who brings us joy by the annual celebration of Saint Dominic Savio, your confessor, mercifully grant that we who celebrate his heavenly birthday, may also imitate his example. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Novissimi (the four Last Things) (CIC, q. 29)

CLOSING PRAYER: Act of Hope



**23. St. Therese of the Child Jesus
(AKA of Liseux) (p. 90) (AD1873-1897)**

FEAST: October 1

Our Lord Jesus Christ has told us that we must be like little Children to enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt 18: 3). God is our Heavenly Father and we are His children. While we are alive on Earth, we have a spiritual life, a relationship with our Heavenly Father, which is our preparing for Heaven. We try to live as children of our Heavenly Father, trusting Him to take care of us, doing what is best for us, even when it hurts, and giving us our daily bread. (Mt 6: 25-34)

A very good example of living as a child of our Heavenly Father was St. Therese of the Child Jesus, also known as the Little Flower. She wanted to be a religious sister from a very early age and even asked the Pope for permission to enter the convent early. She became very holy very quickly because of her child-like love of God.

OPENING PRAYER: O Lord, Who has said: Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven: grant us, we beg You, so to follow in humility and simplicity of heart the footsteps of the blessed virgin, St. Teresa, that we may obtain everlasting rewards. Who lives and reigns, forever and ever. Amen.

LESSON: Spiritual Life



24. St. Maria Goretti (p. 58) (AD1890-1902)

FEAST: July 6

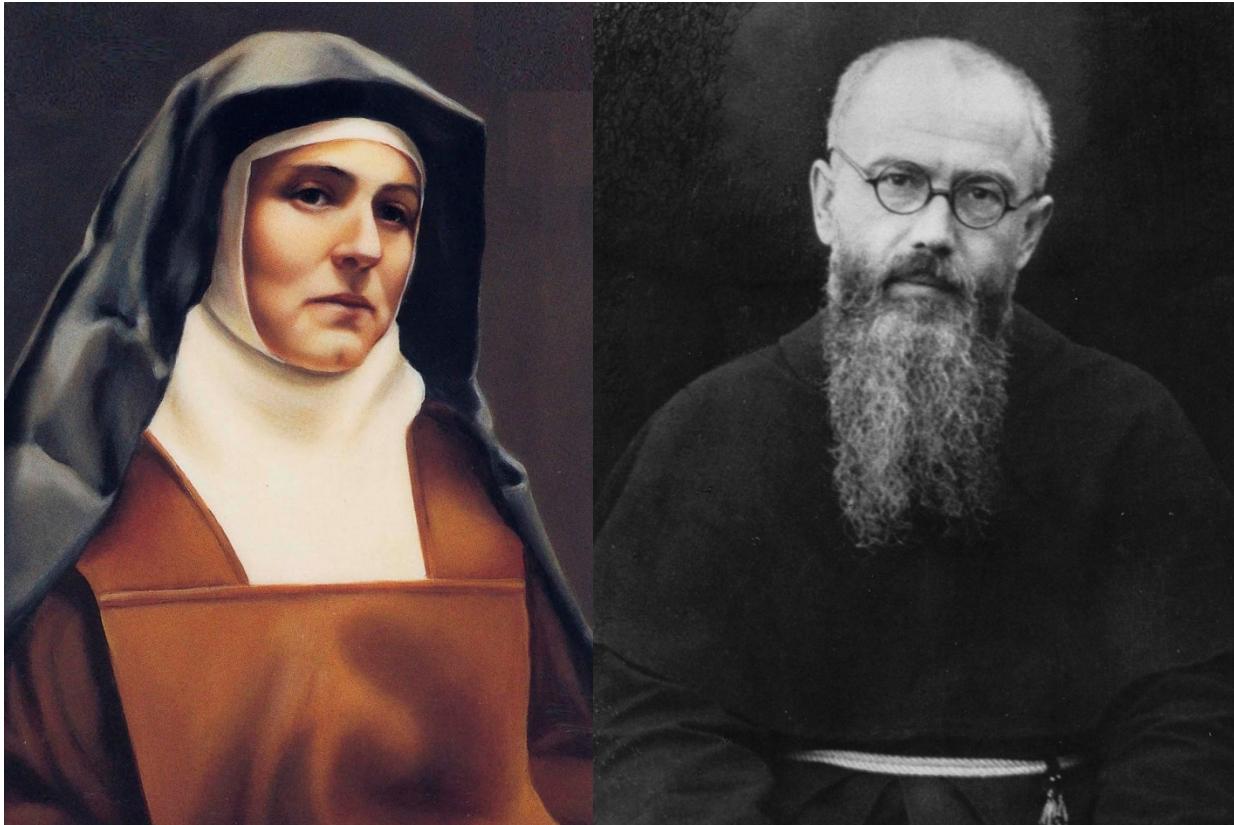
God wants us to love everyone, but we have to love Him first. (Lk 10: 27) We look to love other people because other people are one of the ways that we can experience love. But we cannot love people only the way we feel like loving them, but loving them the way that God wants us to love each other. That is why Maria was a Saint. Alesandro wanted her to sin with him, which would have been bad for him. Because she loved God, she did

not want to sin and because she loved Alesandro, she did not want him to sin.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, author of innocence and lover of chastity, who bestowed the grace of martyrdom on your handmaid, the virgin Saint Maria Goretti, in her youth, grant, we pray, through her intercession, that as you gave her a crown for her steadfastness, so we, too, may be firm in obeying Your commandments. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

LESSON: Sixth & Ninth Commandments
(CIC qq. 49, 50; appendix B)

CLOSING PRAYER: Act of Love



**25. St. Maximillian Kolbe
(1894-1941) (p. 122)**
**& St. Teresa Benedicta a Croce
(Edith Stein) (1891-1942)**

FEASTS: August 14
August 9

Found in their Vademedecum:

St. Teresa Benedicta was born Edith Stein in Breslau, Germany on 12 October 1891, the youngest of eleven children of a very devout Jewish family. Edith was a great student and received her doctoral degree in Philosophy. During World War I, she helped in the military hospitals. After the war, she taught at the University of Freiburg. She was baptized a Catholic on January 1, AD1922. She taught German at the Dominican Sister's school in Speyer and spoke publically about the role of women in God's plan.

On October 14, AD1933, Edith entered the Carmelite Convent in Cologne and took the religious name, Teresa, Benedicta a Cruce – Teresa,

Blessed of the Cross. The Nazis arrested Teresa and her sister, Rose and were sent to the concentration camp at Auschwitz, the same place that St. Maximillian Kolbe died.

St. Teresa Benedicta was killed, along with many others, on 9 August, AD1942.

Context: Two times during the 20th Century (the 1900s) most of the most powerful countries in the world went to war with each other. The second time was from 1939-1945. Many governments at that time were killing people that disagreed with them or who they did not like. This included people who were different nationalities or religions. In Germany, many Catholics, especially Catholic priests and nuns were being killed by the Government. The Saints of this lesson were two of the more famous.

God is a Trinity; that is, He is three divine persons Who are all one God. They know and love each other in perfect unity. God created us to share in that life and sent the Son so that we can be part of the life of God by being part of Jesus. Many people reject that offer of love and prefer to live in sin. When evil men wanted to kill people to teach some of them not to fight against them, Maximillian Kolbe offered to die in the place of one of those men. St. Teresa Benedicta was a Jewess who converted to Catholicism because she was seeking the truth. She became a Carmelite nun and refused to run when the Nazi's came looking to kill Jews in Europe.

OPENING PRAYER: O God, Who filled Your martyrs St. Maximillian Kolbe and St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross with a burning love for the Immaculate Virgin Mary and with zeal for souls and love of neighbor, graciously grant, through their intercession, that, striving for Your glory by eagerly serving others, we may be conformed, even until death, to Your Son and imitate Him even until death. Who lives and reigns, forever and ever. Amen.

LESSON: Most Holy Trinity (CIC qq. 7-9)

CLOSING PRAYER: Act of Hope

PLEASE ALSO READ: St. Pio of Pietrelcina (p. 132)

St. John XXIII (p. 139)

St. John Paul II (p. 140)