

Restore the Roots



Cultivating Your Domestic Church

A Liturgical Living Initiative of St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral, La Crosse, WI

Vol. 1 No. 10

February Feast Days

3 St. Blaise



Martyred in 314 AD, St. Blaise was a devoted and holy bishop. Not much is known about him outside of legends. Some say he was a doctor before becoming a priest. He lived during an era of Christian persecution, so he escaped to the wilderness. Legend has it that hunters stumbled upon a cave where they found St. Blaise living peacefully among wild beasts. The hunters captured him and sent him to prison. While in prison, a mother brought her son, choking on a fish bone, to him. St. Blaise healed him, which is why he is known as the patron of throat illnesses. Ask St. Blaise to intercede for sore throats or other throat illnesses. Today, bundle up and take a prayer walk in the woods. Have some fish for dinner! Don't forget to get your throats blessed at Mass!

8 St. Josephine Bakhita



Born in Sudan in 1869, St. Josephine endured the horrors of slavery before finding freedom and faith in Christ. The turning point in her life came when she joined the Canossian Daughters of Charity in Italy, a religious order dedicated to serving people who were poor and marginalized. St. Josephine devoted herself to God and the service of others, embodying the principles of compassion and selflessness. Her journey from slavery to sainthood culminated in her canonization in 2000. She once said, "If I were to meet those men who abducted me, or even those who tortured me, I would kneel and kiss their hands, for if that hadn't happened, I would not be a Christian and a religious today." Today, forgive someone who hurt you, even just in prayer. If you feel you can't forgive someone, ask for the intercession of St. Josephine Bakhita to help you forgive.

11 Our Lady of Lourdes



Mary, under the title of Our Lady of Lourdes, appeared to a poor 14 year old girl, Bernadette Soubirous, in 1858 near the grotto of Massabielle in Lourdes, France. Amongst 18 visits from the beautiful virgin, our Blessed Mother revealed herself to Bernadette with the words, "I am the Immaculate Conception." Our Lady instructed Bernadette to go tell the local priests she wished a chapel to be built where she was appearing. Those who bathed or drank from the grotto's fresh spring water, dug by St. Bernadette, experienced many miraculous healings. Today, the grotto is a place of pilgrimage as millions travel each year to receive grace and healing. The miraculous spring can remind us of our Baptism, so recount your family members' baptisms today. Have a French press coffee or a desert of macarons, madeleines or eclairs.

14 Ash Wednesday



Go to Mass today! Make sure to pick up the Lent issue of Restore the Roots.

21 Ember Days Start



Ember Days are optional days of preparation and fasting. Spring Ember Days are the 21, 23, and 24. Wednesday and Saturday are days of fasting; one meal with meat is permitted. Friday is a fasting day with no meat. We thank God for the flowers and bees that produce the beeswax for altar candles. Offer fasts for priests and more vocations!

22 St. Peter's Chair



As strange as it may sound, on February 22, the Church celebrates a chair. Not just any chair, but the very chair that St. Peter, our first pope, would have used. A physical chair exists in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, but today we also remember its spiritual significance. As Pope Benedict XVI reminds us, the chair is a "symbol of the special mission of Peter and his successors to tend Christ's flock, keeping it united in faith and in charity." Today, pray for Pope Francis, Bishop Callahan, and the unity of the Church. Bring out a family heirloom to share with your children!

Monthly Devotion: *The Holy Family*

The Holy Family



I recently read the memoirs of Fatima visionary Sr. Lúcia. In it, she describes home life as a child, and I was struck by several parts of her description. “Our house was like a house for all,” she said. People were constantly coming and going— friends, family, fellow farmers, beggars. No one was refused anything. “You’ll wear yourself out, wanting to attend to everyone!” someone once told Lúcia’s mother. “Never mind,” her mother responded, “I help others and God helps me.” On Sundays, Lúcia’s father carried his youngest daughter to Mass on his shoulders, and after Mass and lunch, dozens of children would be playing in the street. Aunts and neighbors would be conversing on the steps while the men played cards and talked on the patio. “At sunset,” Sr. Lúcia writes, “when the bells of the Church rang for the Angelus, my father got up and, with him, all the others. Removing his cap, my father led the three Hail Marys to which they responded. Then, quite content, they said goodbye, each one going to his own home to have their evening meal and rest. They had spent the Lord’s Day well in His grace, having fulfilled His Law, and were thus ready to carry on with their labors the following day.”

Sr. Lúcia’s memoirs are filled with idyllic descriptions of moments like this in which her family prayed, rejoiced, suffered, and served together. I found myself thinking, “This is not too different from the life the Holy Family would have lived.” Accounting for particulars of the time and culture, Jesus’ home in Nazareth would have likewise been filled with prayer, rejoicing, suffering, and serving. As Sr. Lúcia’s father taught his sons to work the fields and his daughters to pasture the sheep, Joseph would have tutored Jesus in his carpentry trade. The God-man who said, “My yoke is easy and my burden is light,” (in addition to the spiritual meaning) probably also literally made the best yokes in town, perfectly fitting each pair of oxen. Like Sr. Lúcia’s mother who kept the house alive

with visitors, Jesus would have been formed by a mother who never thought of her own needs, a mother whose first move was to go “in haste” to serve her pregnant cousin after receiving word that they were both with child. Their house would have been a house of prayer. As faithful Jews, they would have been formed in the Scriptures, especially the Psalms, and would have recited the Tefillah thrice and Shema twice daily.

Devotion to the Holy Family has been popular since the early Church. In the East, the Copts celebrated Joseph, Mary, and Jesus’ flight into Egypt. With growing devotion in the West, and in response to the decline of family unity, Pope Leo XIII approved a feast day dedicated to the Holy Family in 1893. Today, the world tells us that the individual is the basic unit of society. This is not true. The fundamental unit and foundation of society is the family, the domestic home. The home is where we first know God, begin to serve the common good, and learn the meaning of suffering. It is a place where people care about where you are and where you are going. On the doorpost (mezuzah) of every Jewish home in Jesus’ time was a box with passages from Deuteronomy which speak of the importance of serving God. Upon entering and leaving the house, family members would touch the box and say, “May the Lord guard my coming and going both now and forever.” It was a reminder of two things. First, that all their endeavors were to be righteous and ordered towards serving the Lord. Second, it was a reminder that they were rooted. They were part of something bigger than themselves; they were members of a household to which they were going to return.

Outside of Sunday Mass, three concrete practices serve us well to unite families in charity during our sojourn on earth.

First, make a habit of praying together, especially the rosary.

Second, have your house blessed and your home enthroned. The house blessing is a traditional practice around the feast of the Epiphany in which we beseech the Lord to bless

(Continued on page 3)

The Holy Family (continued)

the space in which we live, repel all evils, and protect the members' coming and going. The Enthronement to the Sacred Heart is a consecration of the family members who renew their will to belong entirely to Jesus. While the house blessing happens every year, the Enthronement is usually a one-time rite, perhaps renewed at special moments in the family's life.

Finally, serve the community together. The common good of your family is linked to the common good of the parish and town in which you find yourselves. Practice a happy and charitable gift of self. It does not have to be a formalized act with an organization; it may be as simple as inviting neighbors over for dinner, baking Christmas cookies, or dedicating a decade of the rosary to those you know are suffering.

May we remember that God came to earth and chose to be born into a simple, humble family! May we follow their model of prayer, hope, rejoicing and endurance.

+JMJ+

Many saints, religious and devout Catholics throughout the centuries have placed their writings under the patronage of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph by using the inscription "+JMJ+". Written at the top of a page, the small inscription calls to mind that we are asking for the guidance and intercession of Jesus, Mary and Joseph while we write. We may not be working on a spiritual work, but by placing this front and center, it reminds us to be encouraging, joyful and holy. It may also cause us to pause before writing or typing something which is not kind or uplifting, or maybe could be downright rude or sinful. Let us renew this practice! Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!

⚠ Indulgence Alert ⚠

A plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful who personally (this can be done publicly in a group) make the Way of the Cross piously, or devoutly unite themselves to the Way of the Cross while it is being led by the Supreme Pontiff and broadcast *live* on television or radio.

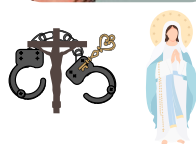
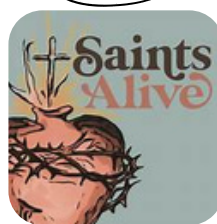
A plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful who on any of the Fridays of Lent devoutly recite after Communion the prayer "En ego, O bone et dulcissime Iesu" (below) before a crucifix.

All conditions of a plenary indulgence must be met. Otherwise it becomes a partial indulgence.

En ego, O bone et dulcissime Iesu

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus, I cast myself upon my knees in thy sight, and with the most fervent desire of my soul, I pray and beseech thee that thou wouldst impress upon my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, with true contrition for my sins and a firm purpose of amendment; while with deep affection and grief of soul I ponder within myself and mentally contemplate thy five wounds, having before my eyes the words which David the prophet put on thy lips concerning thee: "My hands and my feet they have pierced, they have numbered all my bones."

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FROM SHACKLES TO SAINTHOOD

Want to learn more about St. Josephine Bahkita?

Listen to the radio show style podcast, "Saints Alive," for her incredible story. Find it on any podcast platform. While you're there, listen to the episode on St. Bernadette for the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes!

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St. Blaise and the 14 Holy Helpers

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This month we have the feast day of St. Blaise, one of the 14 Holy Helpers. The term “14 Holy Helpers” may be an unfamiliar title for many. While this was a feast day (Aug. 8) on the Church calendar, the reform of the calendar in 1969 eliminated this feast day.

But who are the Holy Helpers and why are they Important? These 14 Saints were all part of the early Church, most were martyrs and helped shape the future of Christianity. Their rise to being invoked against many illnesses came about in Medieval times as the Black Plague raged in Europe. With no warning, people fell ill and died within hours. In response, the faithful did what they knew best; called upon their heavenly family for protection. Each of these saints is invoked against specific, yet different, illnesses. Because of their wide protection as a group, they became known as the 14 Holy Helpers. The next time sickness hits you or your family, remember to call upon these saints.

The Cathedral has an altar piece in the gathering area depicting the 14 Holy Helpers. Stop and take a look at this beautiful piece!

The 14 Saints and their invocations are:

- St. Blaise - Throat
- St. George - Skin and Palsy
- St. Pantaleon - Lung
- St. Erasmus - Stomach
- St. Margaret of Antioch - Kidney
- St. Giles (aka Aegidius) - Crippling ailments
- St. Christopher - Plagues and sudden death
- St. Vitus - Paralysis, Nervous disease, Epilepsy
- St. Catherine of Alexandria - Sudden death
- St. Denis (aka Dionysius) - Demonic assault
- St. Eustace - Fires (temporal and eternal)
- St. Barbara - Fever and sudden death
- St. Cyriacus - Eye
- St. Acatius - Headaches

Holy Helpers, pray for us in all sickness!

Mardi Gras, Season?

Fat Tuesday? Not so fast. Although typically seen as one day before Lent starts when we pull out all the stops, party, eat a delicious meal and say good bye to all the richness before our fasting starts, this was actually the *last day* of the celebrating. In many countries, this season is known as Carnival or “Carne vale” meaning “meat-farewell!” and was many weeks long from Epiphany to the day before Ash Wednesday. If you have been feasting for one day before Lent, **you’re doing it all wrong!!!**

Why does it even matter? The Church in her beautiful wisdom has set times for fasting to help us sacrifice, hone our senses and turn back to God. But fasting is hard to get through if you don’t first have a hearty meal (or season in our case). You might have heard the phrase, “first we fast, then we feast”. This is absolutely true. However, the liturgical year is cyclical. We fast, we feast, we fast, and so on. We are not to live in perpetual fasting. Nor should we live in a perpetual feast.

In these last weeks before Lent, where we turn from our sinful ways, let us feast in a good and holy fashion. Eat the sweets and treats, go out to dinner or make sumptuous meals, and go out with friends or host a party. Then, when Mardi Gras ends, bid everyone a holy Lent, and wake up on Ash Wednesday ready to turn a new leaf toward God with a renewed vigor in fasting from not only food but more importantly, all of our vices.