

Tuesday 30th September

Today is the feast day of St. Jerome (345-420). He is the patron saint of librarians and was responsible for translating the Bible into Latin, making it accessible to many more people. Jerome used his education to help others find God. It is important that we remember his contribution and commitment on this day, and that we also recognise the power of language and how it is used to spread the message and word of God.

*Seek out The Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near.
Let the wicked abandon his way and the evil one his thoughts. Let him turn back to The Lord who will take pity on him, to our God, for he is rich in forgiveness;
for my thoughts are not your thoughts and your ways are not my ways, declares The Lord.
For the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.*

*For, as the rain and the snow come down from the sky and do not return before having watered the earth, fertilising it and making it germinate to provide seed for the sower and food to eat, so it is with the word that goes from my mouth: it will not return to me unfulfilled or before having carried out my good pleasure and having achieved what it was sent to do.
Yes, you will go out with joy and be led away in safety. Mountains and hills will break into joyful cries before you and all the trees of the countryside clap their hands.*

Cypress will grow instead of thorns, myrtle instead of nettles. And this will be fame for The Lord, an eternal monument never to be effaced.

Wednesday 1st October

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus (1873-1897) dedicated her short life to loving God. She led a simple life of prayer and devotion. Therese reminds us that seemingly small and insignificant actions allow us to show our commitment to God. We are encouraged to think of Him in our daily actions.

O wondrous Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus, who, in thy brief earthly life, didst become a mirror of angelic purity, of courageous love and of whole-hearted surrender to Almighty God, now that thou art enjoying the reward of thy virtues, turn thine eyes of mercy upon us who trust in thee. Obtain for us the grace to keep our hearts and minds pure and clean like unto thine, and to detest in all sincerity whatever might tarnish ever so slightly the luster of a virtue so sublime, a virtue that endears us to thy heavenly Bridegroom. Ah, dear Saint, grant us to feel in every need the power of thy intercession; give us comfort in all the bitterness of this life and especially at its latter end, that we may be worthy to share eternal happiness with thee in paradise. Amen.

Thursday 2nd October

The feast day of The Holy Guardian Angels is observed today. We are encouraged to feel grateful and express thanks for the comfort of having a guardian angel watching over us, protecting us from danger and providing us with strength and guidance during difficult times.

*Dear Angel at my side,
my good and loyal friend,
you have been with me since the moment I was born.
You are my own personal guardian,
given me by God as my guide and protector,
and you will stay with me till I die.
He who created you and me
gave me to you as your particular charge.
You assisted in great joy at my baptism,
when I became part of the Mystical Body of Christ,
and was made a member of the household of God
and an heir of heaven.*

Friday 3rd October

Saint Francis of Assisi (1181 – 1226)

In his youth, Francis was a well-loved man by all who met him. He sought power, success, wealth and glory. It was not until God visited him in a dream and spoke to him that he began to change his ways. He repented for his sins and acted passionately to show gratitude to God for the gift of life and for everything on this beautiful earth. Francis treated all his companions – whether beggar or bishop – with the utmost respect. He showed others by example that it is possible to have no material possessions, yet still be happy. He urged the wealthy to sell their possessions and give to the poor. Despite sufferings and humiliations throughout his life, Francis remained faithful to God, until the end. Even after illness claimed his sight, he praised God by writing his *Canticle of the Sun*, from which today's prayer is taken.

As we prepare for his feast day (Saturday 4th October) we are encouraged to reflect on our own behaviour. Do we cherish and show gratitude for all that we have? Do we show kindness and respect to all living creatures? It is never too late to turn to God and to practice the teachings of St. Francis.

*O Most High, all-powerful, good Lord God,
to you belong praise, glory,
honour and all blessing.
Be praised, my Lord, for all your creation
and especially for our Brother Sun,
who brings us the day and the light;
he is strong and shines magnificently.
O Lord, we think of you when we look at him.
Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon,*

*and for the stars
which you have set shining and lovely
in the heavens...
...Be praised, my Lord,
for those who forgive for love of you;
and for those
who bear sickness and weakness
in peace and patience
- you will grant them a crown.
Be praised, my Lord, for our Sister Death,
whom we must all face.
I praise and bless you, Lord,
and I give thanks to you,
and I will serve you in all humility.*