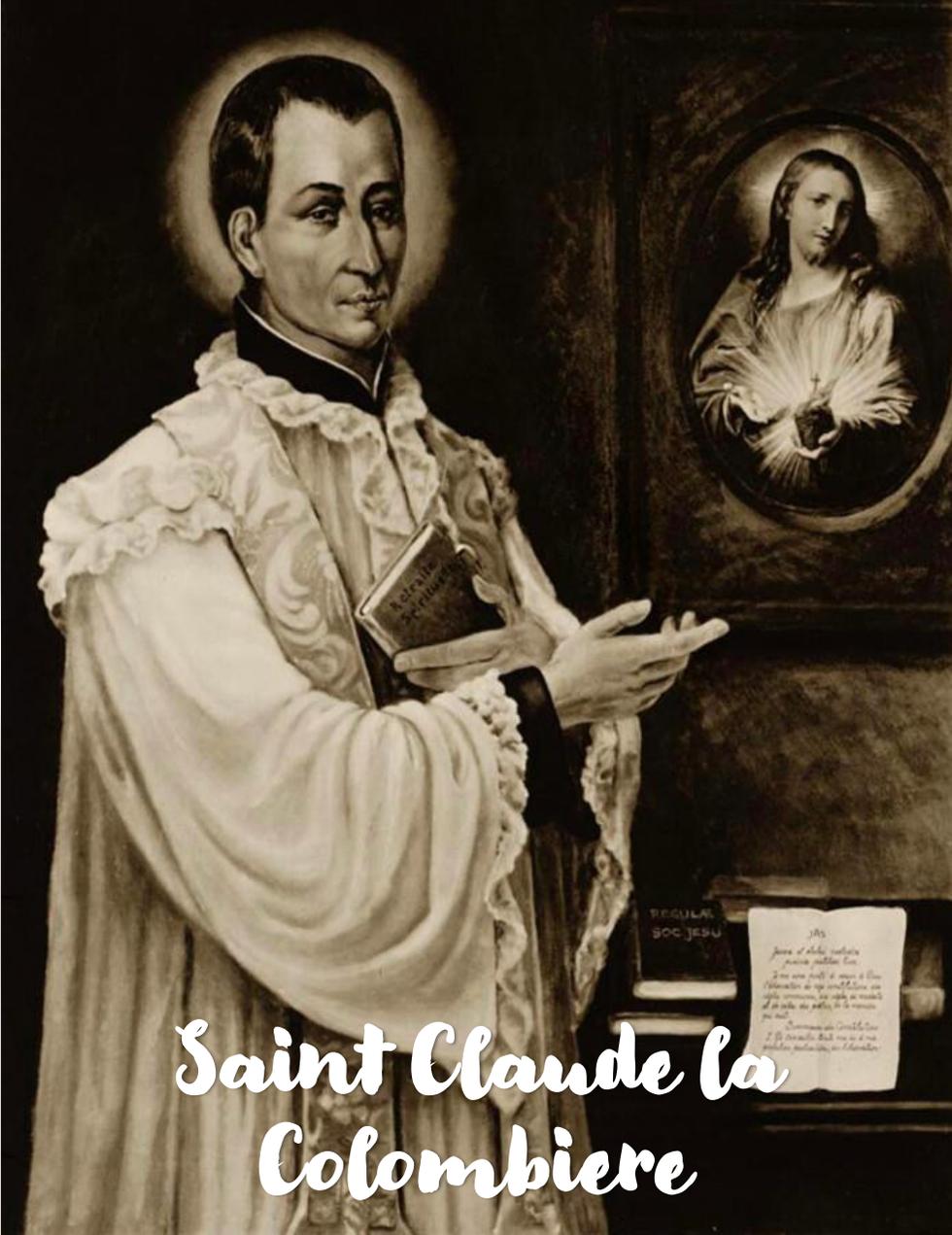




Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 15TH FEBRUARY

Thursday 15th February



Saint Claude la
Colombiere

Claude showed remarkable preaching skills long before his ordination in 1675. Two months later, he was made superior of a small Jesuit residence in Burgundy. It was there he first encountered Margaret Mary Alacoque. For many years after he served as her confessor.

He was next sent to England to serve as confessor to the Duchess of York. He preached by both words and by the example of his holy life, converting a number of Protestants. Tensions arose against Catholics and Claude, rumored to be part of a plot against the king, was imprisoned. He was ultimately banished, but by then his health had been ruined.

He died in 1682. Pope John Paul II canonized Claude de la Colombiere in 1992.

Reflection

As a fellow Jesuit and as a promoter of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Saint Claude must be very special to Pope Francis who has so beautifully emphasized the mercy of Jesus. The emphasis on God's love and mercy are characteristic of both men.

Friday 16th February

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St. Juliana of Nicomedia

During the last great persecution before the legalization of Christianity in the Roman Empire, the Emperor Diocletian ordered the killing of thousands of Christians for their fidelity to their faith. Among the great number of youths who gave their lives rather than abandon their faith in Jesus Christ was St. Juliana, Virgin and Martyr. Her feast falls on the anniversary of her martyrdom, February 16, 305.

According to the Martyrology of the Venerable Bede, Juliana lived in the city of Nicomedia in Bythunia (now in Turkey). Juliana was martyred for the faith when she refused to marry a Roman prefect.

A prayer to St. Juliana of Nicomedia:

Lord God, You gave St. Juliana the crown of eternal joy because she gave her life rather than renounce the virginity she had promised in witness to Christ.

Encouraged by her generosity, help us to rise out of the bondage of our earthly desires and attain to the glory of your kingdom.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit.

One God, for ever and ever. Amen.