



Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 11TH MARCH

Monday 11th March



Saint Aengus

Nearby was the famous monastery founded by St. Fintan, and Aengus entered the monastery while he was still only a teenager. He quickly earned for himself the reputation of being very clever and very holy.

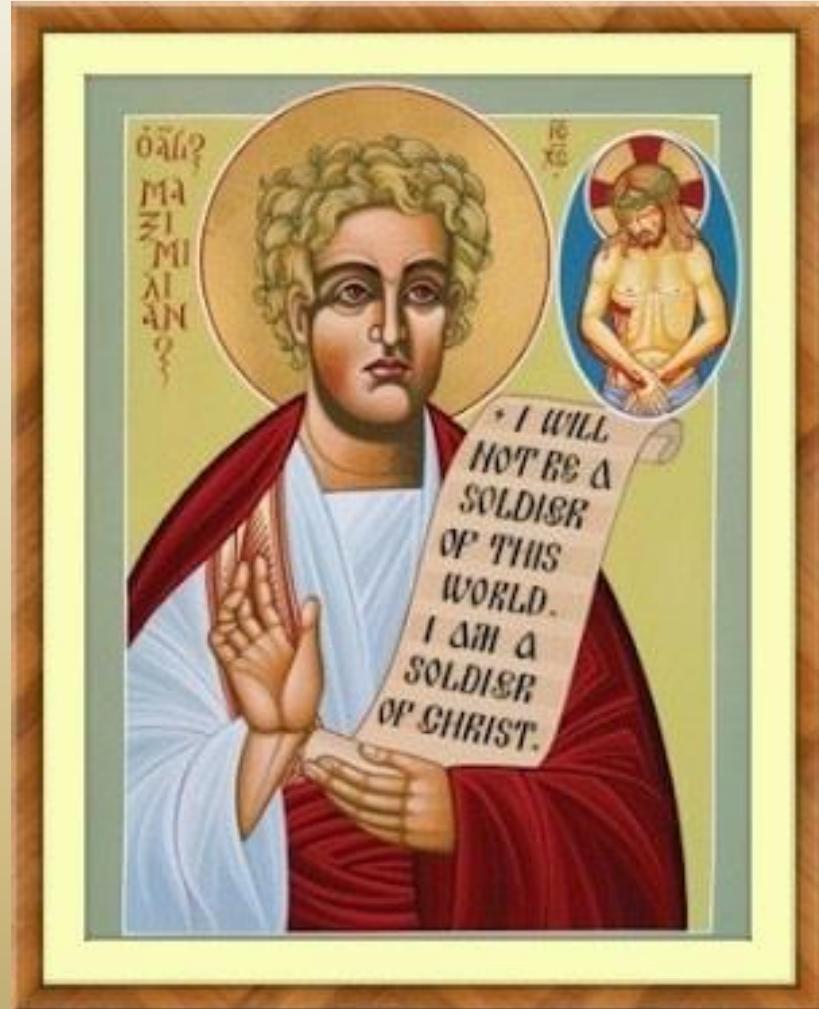
Aengus felt called by God in a special way, so he built himself a cell at Dysert, about six miles from the monastery of Clonenagh. There he prayed for long hours and practised penance. At this retreat, Aengus used to make 300 genuflections each day and of saying all the Psalter, that is the 150 Psalms from the Bible. He would say 50 psalms in his cell, another 50 under a nearby tree and the last 50 were said with half of his body plunged into cold water.

The fame of this holy man spread far and wide and soon many followers came from the four corners of Ireland to benefit from his wisdom and holiness. So many flocked to see and hear him that his whole way of life began to change. He didn't like this at all and he was no longer able to go into his cell and "pray to his father in secret". Because of all this excitement he decided to look for some quieter place. He decided to leave Clonenagh.

St. Aengus is best known for the writings he has left. The most famous of these is the Féilire or "Calendar of Aengus". It is a hymn in the Irish language in praise of the saints and it lists all the main saints of Ireland.

Our Father...

Tuesday 12th March



Maximilian of Tebessa, also known as Maximilian of Numidia, (Latin: Maximilianus; AD 274–295) was a Christian saint and martyr, whose feast day is observed on 12 March. Born in AD 274, the son of Fabius Victor, an official connected to the Roman army, Maximilian was obliged to enlist at the age of 21. He is noted as the earliest recorded conscientious objector, although it is believed that other Christians at the time also refused military service and were executed.

The Acta Maximiliani was probably written sometime before 313. Maximilianus, born about AD 274, was a native of Theveste (today Tébessa) in eastern Numidia (corresponding to the eastern part of modern Algeria) already annexed by Rome for four centuries. His father, a Christian named Fabius Victor, was a former soldier enlisted in the Roman army. On 12 March 295 at Theveste (now Tébessa, Algeria), he was brought before the proconsul of Africa Proconsularis, Cassius Dio, to swear allegiance to the Emperor as a soldier. He refused, stating that, as a Christian, he could not serve in the military, leading to his immediate beheading by sword.

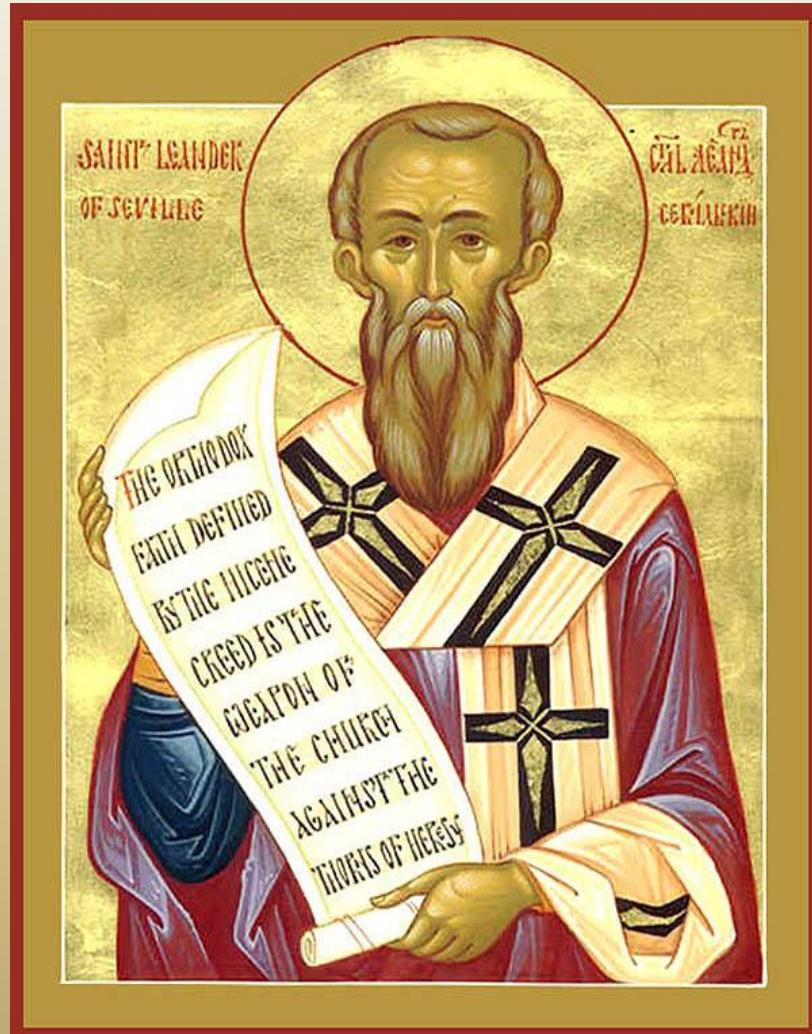
Prayer

Pray for us that we will retain the courage to hold firm to our faith despite the trials.

Glory be to the...

Saint Maximilian of Tebessa

Wednesday 13th March



Saint Leander of Seville

Leander was the son of Severianus and Theodora, known for their piety. He was the elder brother of Saint Isidore of Seville, Saint Fulgentius of Ecija, and Saint Florentina of Cartagena. Monk at Seville, Spain. Bishop of Seville.

He converted Saint Hermengild and Prince Reccared, sons of the Arian Visigoth king Leovigild, who then exiled Leander to Constantinople from 579 to 582. There he became close friends with the papal legate who later became Pope Saint Gregory the Great. Leander recommended that Gregory write his famous commentary (Moralia) on the Book of Job.

When Reccared ascended the throne, Leander was allowed to return to Seville. He worked against Arianism, and presided over the Third Council of Toledo in 589. He revised and unified the Spanish liturgy, and his boundless energy and steady faith led the Visigoths back to orthodox Christianity. Leander wrote an influential Rule for nuns. He introduced the Nicene Creed to Mass in the west and he is honored as a Doctor of the Faith by the Church in Spain.

Reflection

Heavenly Father, help me today to see how I can be a great influence on other people. Direct my words and actions so that I may be a power for good. Help me to see others as you see them.

Amen

Thursday 14th
March



St Matilda of Ringelheim

Matilda, Queen of Germany and wife of King Henry I was the daughter of Count Dietrich of Westphalia and Reinhild of Denmark. She was born about 895 and was raised by her grandmother, the Abbess of Eufurt convent. Matilda married Henry the Fowler, son of Duke Otto of Saxony, in the year 909. She was widowed in the year 936, and supported her son Henry's claim to his father's throne. When her son Otto (the Great) was elected, she persuaded him to name Henry Duke of Bavaria after he led an unsuccessful revolt.

St Matilda was known for her considerable almsgiving. She was severely criticized by both Otto and Henry for what they considered her extravagant gifts to charities. As a result, she resigned her inheritance to her sons and retired to her country home. She was later recalled to the court through the intercession of Otto's wife, Edith. Matilda was welcomed back to the palace and her sons asked for her forgiveness.

Reflection

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Matilda as an example of holiness. Help us to imitate the love of You she showed throughout her whole life. As a wife and mother she faced many difficulties. But despite her husband's death and the conflicts between her sons, she did all you could to serve God worthily and to help lead her family members to virtue.

Pray for me, that I may always seek to serve God in my life. Pray that I may grow closer to God each day. Amen

Friday 15th March



St Louise de Marillac

Born near Meux, France, Louise lost her mother when she was still a child, her beloved father when she was but 15. Her desire to become a nun was discouraged by her confessor, and a marriage was arranged. One son was born of this union. But Louise soon found herself nursing her beloved husband through a long illness that finally led to his death. She eventually became known to St Vincent de Paul and he came to realize that she was the answer to his prayers. She was intelligent, self-effacing, and had physical strength and endurance that belied her continuing feeble health. The missions he sent her on eventually led to four simple young women joining her. Her rented home in Paris became the training centre for those accepted for the service of the sick and poor. Growth was rapid and soon there was the need for a so-called “rule of life,” which Louise herself, under the guidance of Vincent, drew up for the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul.

Reflection

In Louise's day, serving the needs of the poor was usually a luxury only fine ladies could afford. Her mentor, Saint Vincent de Paul, wisely realized that women of peasant stock could reach poor people more effectively, and the Daughters of Charity were born under her leadership. Today, that order—along with the Sisters of Charity—continues to nurse the sick and aging and provide refuge for orphans. Many of its members are social workers toiling under Louise's patronage. The rest of us must share her concern for the disadvantaged.

Saturday 16th March



St Heribert of Cologne

Archbishop of Cologne, Germany, and chancellor of Emperor Otto III . He was born in Worms, where he was ordained after being educated by the Benedictines of Gorze in Lorraine, France. Serving Otto III, Heribert was made an archbishop on 998. Heribert accompanied Otto to Italy in 1002, and brought the emperor's body back to Aachen when Otto died. He also served Emperor St. Henry. Heribert built the monastery of Deutz, on the Rhine and performed miracles, including ending a drought. He is thus invoked for rains. He died in Cologne on March 16, and was buried at Deutz. Heribert was canonized by Pope St. Gregory VII about 1074. Feast day: March 16. Herlindis With Relindis, Benedictine abbesses, the daughters of Count Adelard, who built them a convent at Maaseik on the Meuse, Belgium. These saints were friends of Sts. Willibrord and Boniface.

Reflection

Heavenly Father, we remember all those who are suffering as a result of a lack of water. We ask you to pour down your blessings on those who are impacted by drought and on those who do not have enough clean water to drink. We thank you for the gift of clean water in our homes and in our schools. Amen

Sunday 17th March



St. Patrick of Ireland is one of the world's most popular saints. He was born in Roman Britain and when he was fourteen or so, he was captured by Irish pirates during a raiding party and taken to Ireland as a slave to herd and tend sheep. Patrick's captivity lasted until he was twenty, when he escaped after having a dream from God in which he was told to leave Ireland by going to the coast. There he found some sailors who took him back to Britain and was reunited with his family. He often used shamrocks to explain the Holy Trinity and entire kingdoms were eventually converted to Christianity after hearing Patrick's message.

Patrick preached and converted all of Ireland for 40 years. He worked many miracles and wrote of his love for God in Confessions. After years of living in poverty, traveling and enduring much suffering he died March 17, 461. Patrick was a humble, pious, gentle man, whose love and total devotion to and trust in God should be a shining example to each of us. So complete was his trust in God, and of the importance of his mission, he feared nothing -not even death.

"The Breastplate," Patrick's poem of faith and trust in God:

- "Christ be within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ inquired, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger."

St Patrick