



Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 22ND APRIL

Monday 22nd April



St. Leonides of Alexandria was a Christian martyr of the 3rd century AD. According to the Christian historian Eusebius, his son was the early Church father Origen. In the same passage Eusebius tells us that Leonides was martyred during the persecution of the Roman emperor Septimus Severus in the year 202 AD.

He was a Christian philosopher, and excellently versed both in the physical and sacred sciences. He had seven sons, the eldest of whom was Origen, whom he brought up with abundance of care, returning God thanks for having blessed him with a son of such an excellent disposition for learning, and a very great zeal for piety. These qualifications endeared him greatly to his father, who, after his son was baptized, would come to his bedside while he was asleep, and would kiss them respectfully on the forehead, as being the temple of the Holy Ghost. When the persecution raged at Alexandria, under Lætus, governor of Egypt, in the tenth year of Severus, Leonides was cast into prison. Condemned to death by the Egyptian prefect Lactus, he was beheaded, and his property seized. The feast of St. Leonides is celebrated on April 22. He is a patron of large families.

St Leonides of Alexandria

Our Father...

Tuesday 23rd April



St George

It is uncertain when Saint George was born and historians continue to debate to this day. However, his death date is estimated to be April 23, 303 A.D.

George was born to a Gerontios and Polychronia, a Roman officer and a Greek native of Lydda. Both were Christians from noble families of the Anici and George, Georgios in the original Greek, was raised to follow their faith.

When George was old enough, he was welcomed into Diocletian's army. On February 24, 303 A.D., Diocletian, who hated Christians, announced that every Christian the army passed would be arrested and every other soldier should offer a sacrifice to the Roman gods.

George refused to abide by the order and told Diocletian, who was angry but greatly valued his friendship with George's father.

In an effort to save George, Diocletian attempted to convert him to believe in the Roman gods and made several other offers that George refused.

Finally, after exhausting all other options, Diocletian ordered George's execution. On April 23, 303 A.D., George was decapitated before Nicomedia's outer wall. His body was sent to Lydda for burial, and other Christians went to honor George as a martyr.

Our Father ...

Wednesday 24th April



St Fidelis of Sigmaringen

Born in 1577, Mark Rey became a lawyer who constantly upheld the causes of the poor and oppressed people. Nicknamed “the poor man’s lawyer,” Rey soon grew disgusted with the corruption and injustice he saw among his colleagues. He left his law career to become a priest, joining his brother George as a member of the Capuchin Order. Fidelis was his religious name. His wealth was divided between needy seminarians and the poor.

As a follower of Saint Francis of Assisi, Fidelis continued his devotion to the weak and needy. During a severe epidemic in a city where he was guardian of a friary, Fidelis cared for and cured many sick soldiers.

Reflection

Fidelis’ constant prayer was that he be kept completely faithful to God and not give in to any lukewarmness or apathy. He was often heard to exclaim, “Woe to me if I should prove myself but a halfhearted soldier in the service of my thorn-crowned Captain.” His prayer against apathy, and his concern for the poor and weak make him a saint whose example is valuable today. The modern Church is calling us to follow the example of “the poor man’s lawyer” by sharing ourselves and our talents with those less fortunate and by working for justice in the world.

Thursday 25th April

St Mark the Evangelist



Saint Mark the Evangelist was born in the early 1st century in the year 5 AD in Cyrene, present Libya, Africa. He is well known for being the author of the gospel according to Mark and founder and also bishop of the Church of Alexandria, Egypt. St. Mark passed away in the year 68 AD in Cyrene, present Libya. He was canonized pre-congregation and he is celebrated on the 25th of April every year which is his feast day. He is recognized as one of the early bishops who became Saints.

He was believed to have been imprisoned before being murdered as a martyr. It was said that his neck was tied with a rope and dragged from Alexandria till a little port in Bucoles according to sources in the year 68 AD. Attempts to burn him were in vain and so his fellow Christians claimed his remains and they were buried in a church he founded in Alexandria, The Church of Alexandria. His relics were stolen and transferred to Saint Mark's Basilica, Venice, Italy. Saint Mark the Evangelist died at the age of 63.

Saint Mark is represented as holding the gospel and writing. He is also represented as a lion in the desert and a bishop on a throne decorated with lions. He is portrayed also as a man with a book and a scroll accompanied with a winged lion.

Our Father ...

Friday 26th April



Pope Saint Cletus (sometimes Anacletus), the third Pope, governed the Roman Church from about 76 to about 88 during the reigns of the Emperor Vespasian and of Domitian.

St. Cletus has given earlier historians some trouble because of his name. Two of the early lists of the popes, the so-called "Liberian Catalogue" and the "Poem Against Marcion" list an Anacletus as well as a Cletus. Most ancient lists, however, give the papal succession as Peter, Linus, Cletus, Clement; and modern scholars agree that this is the correct listing. Anacletus is a variant of Cletus, and this seems to have caused the difficulty.

The "Liber Pontificalis" says that his father was Emelianus and that Cletus was a Roman by birth, and belonged to the quarter known as the Vicus Patrici. It also tells us that he ordained twenty-five priests, and was buried in Vaticano near the body of St. Peter. St. Cletus' feast is celebrated along with that of St. Marcellinus on the 26th of April.

Our Father ...

Pope St Anacletus