



# Prayers for week ahead

WEEKS BEGINNING 17TH & 24TH JUNE



## Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June St Botulph of Ikanhoe

Botulph was the brother of Saint Adolph of Utrecht. They were educated at the monastery of Cnobersburg (Burgh Castle), Suffolk under the direction of its founder, Saint Fursey. When Mercian forces under King Penda invaded the region, the boys were sent to study at the monastery at Bosanham, Sussex. He became a Benedictine monk at Farmoutiere-en-Brie, Gaul (modern northeastern France), and was sent back to the British Isles in 647 to establish the Benedictine Order there.

With the support of Saint Syre, Saint Aubierge, and their brother, King Anna of East Anglia, Botulph founded the monastery of Ikanhoe in East Anglia, declining the offer of a part of the royal estate, and settling for a wild, barren site that was removed from people, reported to be haunted by demons, and which would require endless work to sustain the monks. For many years it was believed that the area that grew up around it came to be called Botulph's Town, contracted to Botulphston, and later contracted to Boston in Lincolnshire, but recent research has shown that the original site is another location. The Saxon Chronicle indicates that by 654 Botulph had attracted enough brother monks and hermits that work began on the monastery. Through hard work and faith, the monastery grew in population; the monks built several structures, turned large areas of marsh and scrub into productive farming and grazing lands, and dispelled the people's fears of demons.

Botulph served as spiritual director for Saint Ceolfrith, and worked as a travelling missionary through rough, bandit-plagued areas of East Anglia, Kent and Sussex. His legacy continued for centuries in the strength of the Benedictine movement in the Isles, and in the dozens of churches named for him, many of them built at city gates to serve as safe-haven for travellers in times when robbers roamed the roads, and many in port or river towns.

# Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June

## Blessed Osanna Andreasi

Osanna was the daughter of Italian nobles Nicolaus and Agnes. She was reported to have had a vision of angels, paradise, and the Trinity at age five. Feeling called to religious life, she rejected a marriage arranged by her father, and became a Dominican tertiary at 17; she waited 37 years to complete her vows so she could care for her brothers and sisters after the death of her parents. Osanna was a mystic who would fall into ecstasies whenever she spoke of God. She was a visionary who saw images of Christ bearing his cross. Osanna had the pain of the stigmata along with red marks, but no bleeding. She helped the poor and sick, served as spiritual director for many, spent much of her family's considerable fortune to help the unfortunate. Osanna spoke out against decadence, and criticized the aristocracy for a lack of morality. She was a friend of Blessed Columba of Rieti and a record of her spiritual conversations with Girolamo de Monte Oliveto has survived.





# Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June

## St Romuald

St. Romuald was born at Ravenna about the year 956. In spite of an infinite desire for virtue and sanctity, his early life was wasted in the service of the world and its pleasures. Then one day, obliged by his father, Sergius, to be present at a duel fought by him, he beheld him slay his adversary. The crime made such an impression upon him that he determined to expiate it for forty days, as though it were entirely his own. For this purpose he retired to a Benedictine monastery of St. Apollinare, near Ravenna, where he became Abbot.

Today, let us meditate on the words of St. Romuald: "Realise above all that you are in God's presence, and stand there with the attitude of one who stands before the emperor. Empty yourself completely and sit waiting, content with the grace of God, like the chick who tastes nothing and eats nothing but what his mother brings him."



# Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June The Irish Martyrs

Seventeen of the Irish martyrs, men and women, cleric and lay, who were put to death for the Catholic faith between 1579 and 1654 were beatified in 1992. Six Catholics of Irish birth or connection executed for the faith in England had already been beatified in 1929 and 1987.

Grant us, we pray that through their intercession we may receive the graces which we implore of you if it be your holy will..... We also pray that they may soon be raised to the altars for the glory of your name and the good of your Church. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, your son. Amen.

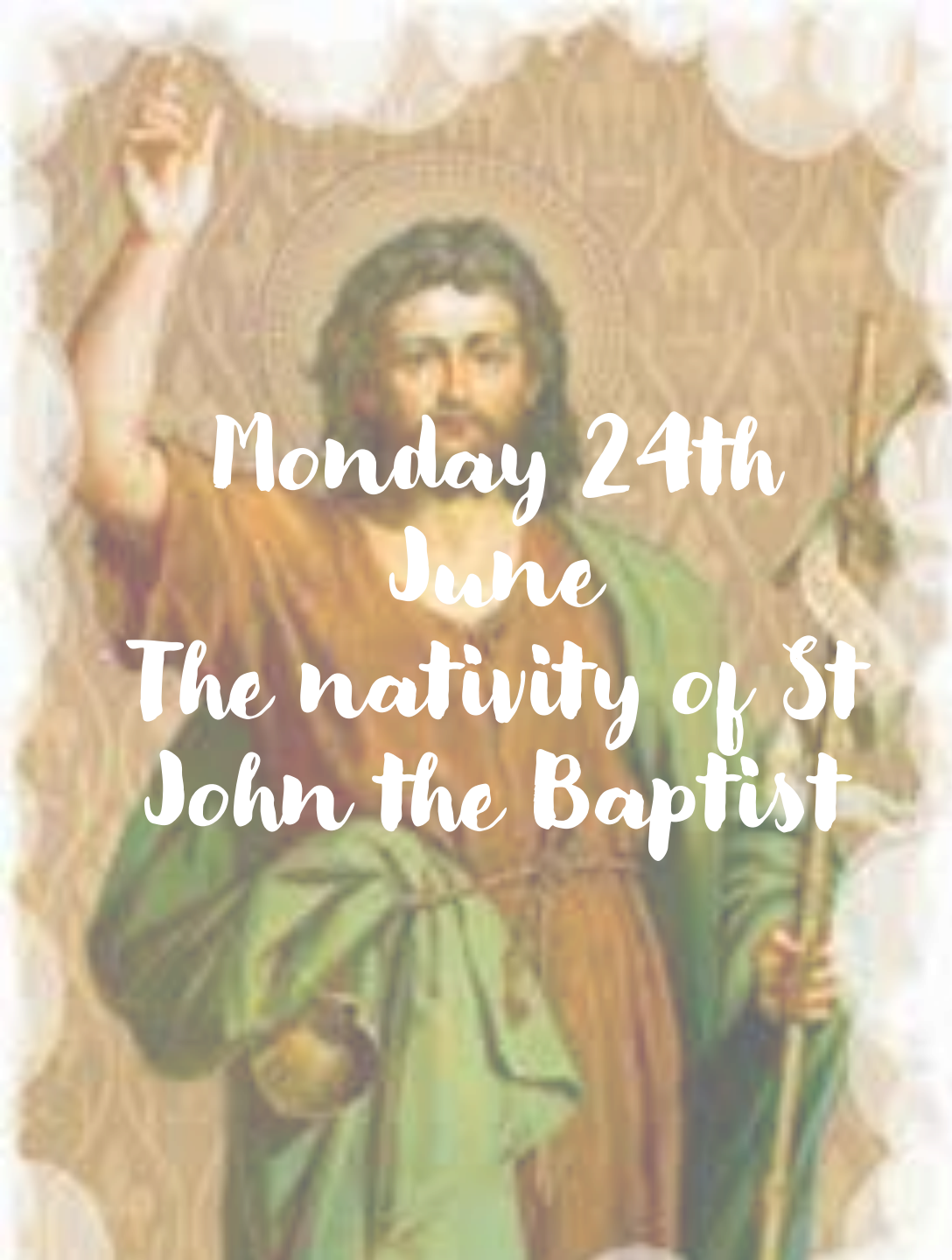




*Friday 21st June  
St Aloysius  
Gonzaga*


- St. Aloysius was intended by his father to be a soldier, however he was determined to be a missionary and even to die for his faith. He renounced his birth right in favour of his brother and at the age of 16 became a Jesuit novice in Rome.
- It can be difficult to go against what others want for us, but when we know it is the right thing to do we can find many gifts in the Lord.
- Father, help me to be brave like St. Aloysius. Help me to do the right thing, even if others turn against me. Give me the gift of your love to inspire me. Amen.





Monday 24th  
June  
The nativity of St  
John the Baptist

- **The birthday of St. John the Baptist**
- Christ said that John the Baptist was the greatest of the sons of men. He has two feast days dedicated to himself. One in August which celebrates his death, and today we celebrate his birth.
- St John's main task was to proclaim the fulfilment of all prophecies - the coming of the incarnate God. He spread this message with great courage. Being a prophet was a difficult job. Sometimes people did not like what they had to say as they often challenged people to change their way of life.
- How often have I been challenged to change my own ways? Has anyone ever commented on my behaviour or attitudes? How have I responded?
- Lord, give me the grace to accept that sometimes I can hurt others through my words or actions. Help me to see that I have the power for good as well as evil and so help me to make wise choices today that are life giving to others. Amen.



Tuesday 25  
June  
St William  
Vercelli

William was born to the Italian nobility. He was orphaned as an infant, and raised by relatives. William was a pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela, Spain at age 14. There he decided on a life devoted to God. William became a hermit for two years at Monte Solicoli where he healed a blind man. He was a friend of Saint John of Pulsano. He started a pilgrimage to the Holy Lands, but discerned that he would be of more use to God in Italy.

William was a hermit at Monte Vergiliano (Monte Vergine). There his reputation for holiness attracted many disciples. In 1119 he formed them into the Hermits of Monte Vergine (Williamites) with a Rule based on the Benedictines; five other houses were formed by its members during William's life, but only the original survives today. When some of the hermits began to grumble that William's austerities were too hard to match, he, Saint John, and a small handful of brothers left in order not to be a cause of dissension.

When their hermitage burned, the Williamites moved to Monte Cognato, and into the area of Naples, Italy. He became advisor to King Roger I of Naples who built him a hermitage at Salerno, Italy. Founded monasteries in the Naples region.

Legend says that William began mining the stone and digging the foundations for the church on Montevergine when his only companion and helper was a single donkey. One evening, a wolf charged from the forest, killed and ate the donkey. William ordered the wolf to take the donkey's place. The wolf, understanding that he had interrupted God's work, bowed his head, and began hauling the loads of stone. Tradition says that the same wolf still prowls the mountain, ready to help those who are in danger and call upon the name of the Virgin Mary.

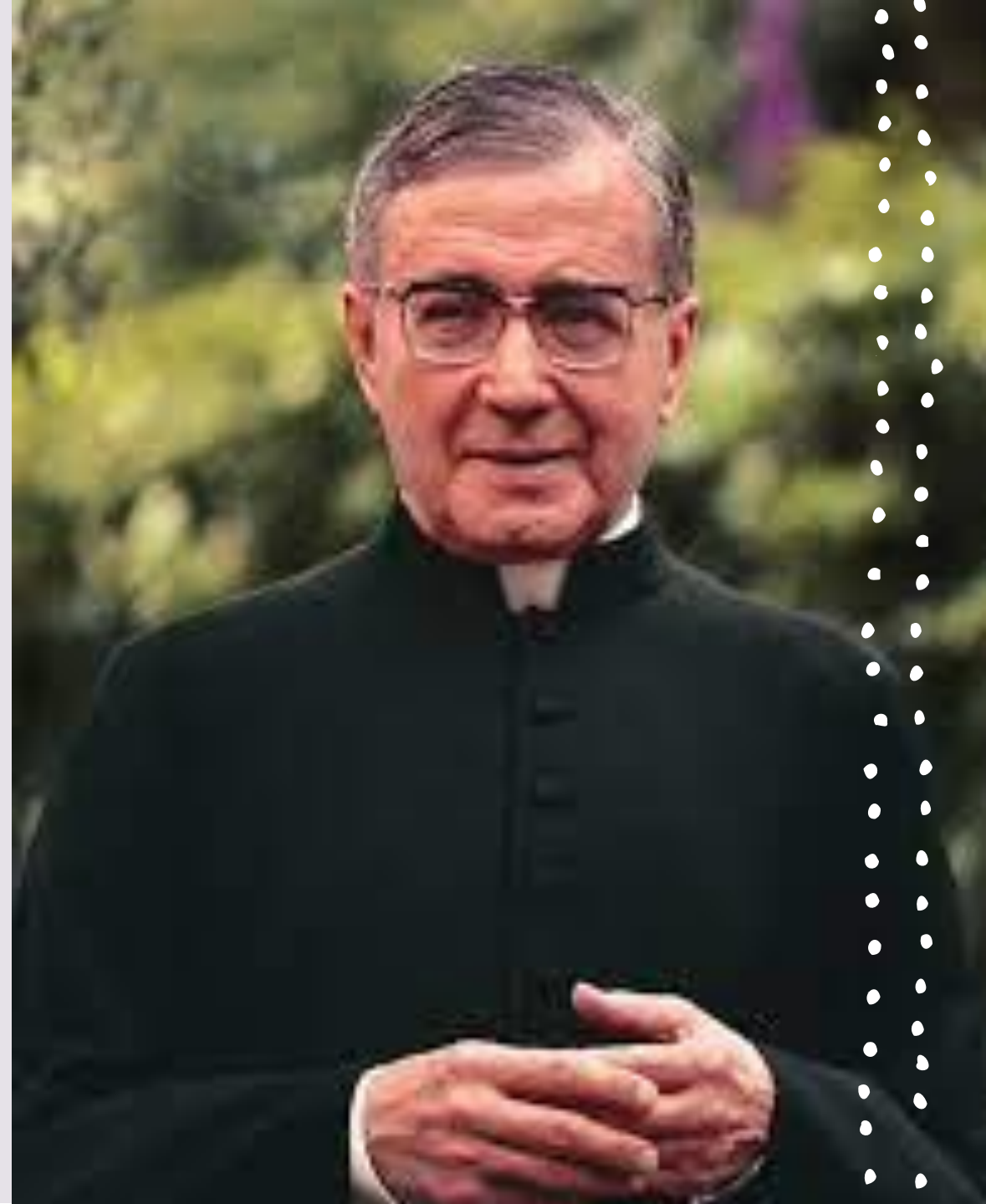


# Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June - St Josemaria Escriva

Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer y Albás (1902-1975) founded Opus Dei, an organization of laypeople and priests dedicated to the teaching that everyone is called to holiness by God and that ordinary life can result in sanctity. He was Canonized in 2002 by Pope John Paul II, who counted Escriva a living witness to practical Christianity.

O God, through the mediation of Mary our Mother, you granted your priest Saint Josemaria countless graces, choosing him as a most faithful instrument to found Opus Dei, a way of sanctification in daily work and in the fulfillment of the Christian's ordinary duties.

Grant that I too may learn to turn all the circumstances and events of my life into occasions of loving you and serving the Church, the Pope and all souls with joy and simplicity, lighting up the pathways of this earth with faith and love.



# Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June - St Cyril of Alexandria

Saints are not born with halos around their heads. Cyril, recognized as a great teacher of the Church, began his career as archbishop of Alexandria, Egypt, with impulsive, often violent, actions. He pillaged and closed the churches of the Novatian heretics—who required those who denied the faith to be re-baptized—participated in the deposing of Saint John Chrysostom, and confiscated Jewish property, expelling the Jews from Alexandria in retaliation for their attacks on Christians. Cyril's importance for theology and Church history lies in his championing the cause of orthodoxy against the heresy of Nestorius, who taught that in Christ there were two persons, one human and one divine.

## Reflection

Lives of the saints are valuable not only for the virtue they reveal but also for the less admirable qualities that also appear. Holiness is a gift of God to us as human beings. Life is a process. We respond to God's gift, but sometimes with a lot of zigzagging. If Cyril had been more patient and diplomatic, the Nestorian church might not have risen and maintained power so long. But even saints must grow out of immaturity, narrowness, and selfishness. It is because they—and we—do grow, that we are truly saints, persons who live the life of God.



# A Holiday Prayer

- Thank You Lord for the joy of teaching and learning as well as the challenges it offers. Lord we pray that You would guard and guide all of our school community and pray that each one will come to a knowledge of and understanding of You.
- Thank You also for school holidays and the opportunity to 'recharge' our batteries - and for the precious times of refreshment that school holidays offer, and we pray that You would use this period away from school and its responsibilities, to be a time of refreshment and renewal, not only for our bodies but also, for our souls and our spirits too.
- We pray that this holiday will bring us to be even closer to You - that it will enable us to re-examine our priorities and principles, our purpose and our perspectives in life. We pray that this will be a time when our minds will be refreshed so that we are able to return to school renewed and refreshed and ready to face the challenges of a new term.
- We pray this will be a time when we draw ever closer to Jesus, our Saviour, and that this may be a time when we grow in grace and have opportunity to listen intently to Your still small voice and to rest in Your promises - to just be still and to know that you are God. Thank You for being our Saviour, in Jesus name we pray. Amen

