



Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 19TH AUGUST

Monday 19th August



St. John Eudes

St. John Eudes was a French missionary and the founder of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity, and was also the author of the liturgical worship of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

St. John was born at Ri, France on November 14th, 1601. At the age of fourteen he took a vow of chastity and since the time he was a child he tried to live in imitation of the Lord Jesus. When he was ordained a priest in 1625, at the age of 24, he was immediately thrust into the service of victims of the plague, whom he cared for at great risk to his own life. He also began preaching missions and was known as the greatest preacher of his age, preaching missions all over France, especially throughout Normandy.

Prayer:

Lord, help me today to act like St John. Help me to be welcoming to all and to find moments to put others before myself. Amen.

Tuesday 20th August



St. Bernard of Clairvaux

Bernard was born of noble parentage in Burgundy, France, in the castle of Fontaines near Dijon. Under the care of his pious parents he was sent at an early age to a college at Chatillon, where he was conspicuous for his remarkable piety and spirit of recollection. When his mother died he began the Cistercian Order. He also persuaded his brothers and several of his friends to follow his example. In 1113, St. Bernard, with thirty young noblemen, presented himself to the holy Abbot, St. Stephen, at Citeaux. He founded numerous other monasteries, composed a number of works and undertook many journeys for the honour of God. Several Bishoprics were offered him, but he refused them all. The reputation of St. Bernard spread far and wide; even the Popes were governed by his advice. He was commissioned by Pope Eugene III to preach the second Crusade.

Prayer:

Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, you navigated the weaknesses of your age, inspired countless others to love God, and made a lasting impact upon the world. Please pray that I will never waver in my love of God and will firmly believe that profound holiness is achievable. Please pray for the whole Church, that we will love Mary in our hearts and allow her to lead us through the darkness we encounter. Amen

Wednesday 21st
August



Saint Pope Pius X

Pope Pius X is perhaps best remembered for his encouragement of the frequent reception of Holy Communion, especially by children. Interested in politics, Pope Pius encouraged Italian Catholics to become more politically involved. One of his first papal acts was to end the supposed right of governments to interfere by veto in papal elections—a practice that reduced the freedom of the 1903 conclave which had elected him.

In 1905, when France renounced its agreement with the Holy See and threatened confiscation of Church property if governmental control of Church affairs were not granted, Pius X courageously rejected the demand.

While he did not author a famous social encyclical as his predecessor had done, he denounced the ill treatment of indigenous peoples on the plantations of Peru, sent a relief commission to Messina after an earthquake, and sheltered refugees at his own expense.

On the 11th anniversary of his election as pope, Europe was plunged into World War I. Pius had foreseen it, but it killed him. "This is the last affliction the Lord will visit on me. I would gladly give my life to save my poor children from this ghastly scourge." He died a few weeks after the war began, and was canonized in 1954.

Reflection

His humble background was no obstacle in relating to a personal God and to people whom he loved genuinely. Pius X gained his strength, his gentleness and warmth for people from the source of all gifts, the Spirit of Jesus. In contrast, we often feel embarrassed by our backgrounds. Shame makes us prefer to remain aloof from people whom we perceive as superior. If we are in a superior position, on the other hand, we often ignore simpler people. Yet we, too, have to help "restore all things in Christ," especially the wounded people of God.

Our Father ...

Thursday 22nd
August



Today we take some time to remember that the Blessed Virgin reigns in heaven together with her Son. She reigns not because she is in any way equal to God but because she is the mother of Christ the King. Her privileges come from her willingly agreeing to become the Mother of God and make our redemption possible.

Prayer

Hail Mary,
Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Our Lady,
Mother and Queen

Friday 23rd August



St. Rose of Lima

St. Rose was born in Lima, in Peru. She lived a life of selflessness and devotion from an early age. She refused to marry, and became a Dominican tertiary at the age of 20. Her asceticism and her intense spiritual experiences excited the criticism of her friends and family and the suspicion of the Church authorities.

She cared for marginalised, was the first person in the Americas to be canonised, and is a patron saint of South America.

Prayer to St. Rose

God our Father, for love of You, St. Rose gave up everything to devote herself to a life of penance.

By the help of her prayers may we imitate her selfless way of life on earth and enjoy the fullness of Your blessings in heaven.

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