

A row of lit candles in dark holders, with a white text box overlaid on the right side. The candles are lit, and the flames are visible. The background is dark, and the text box is white with a decorative border of small white dots.

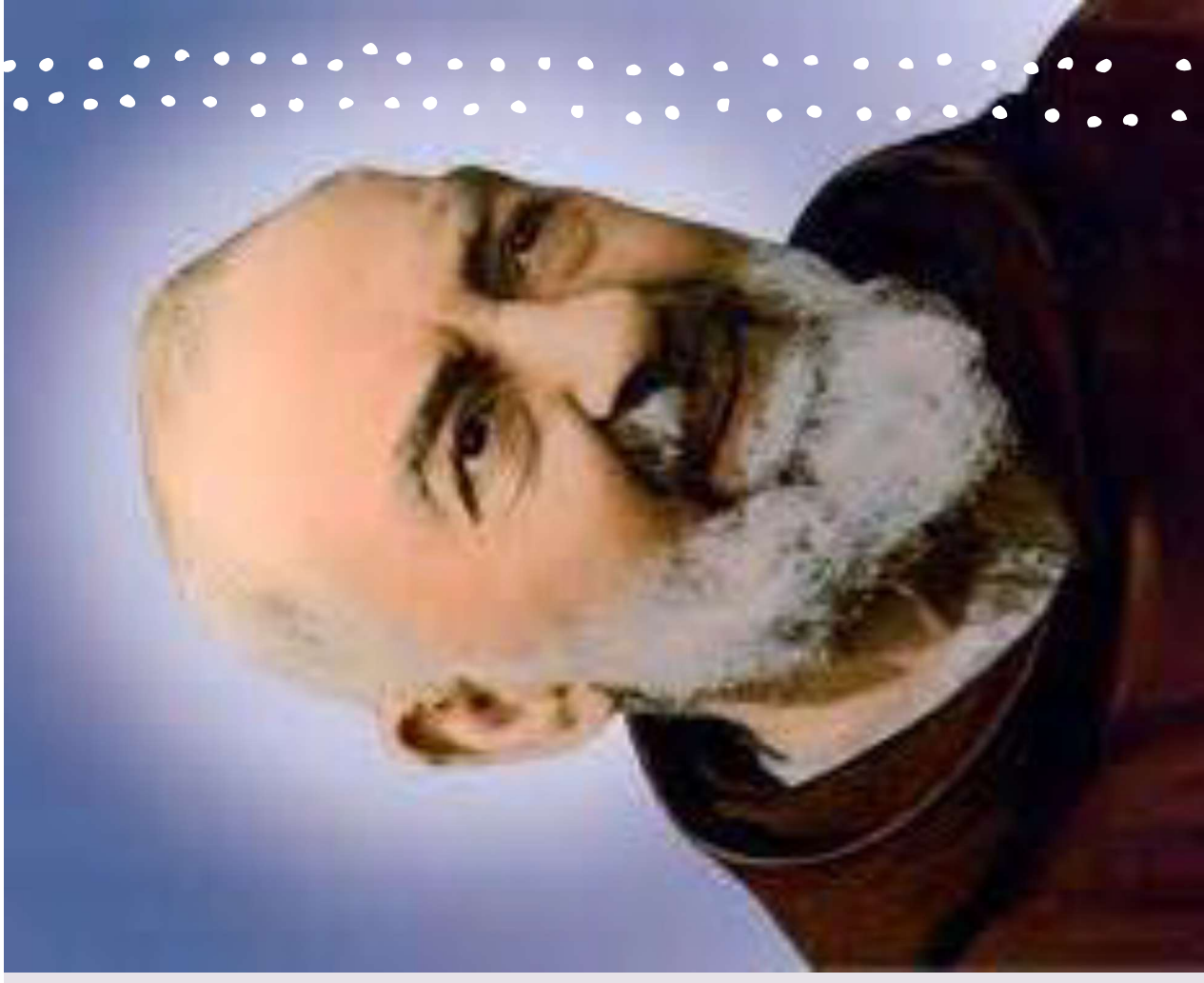
Prayers for week ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 23RD SEPTEMBER

Monday 23rd September St Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)

- St. Padre Pio was born Francesco Forgione, on May 25, 1887, in Pietrelcina, Italy. His parents were peasant farmers. He had an older brother and three younger sisters, as well as two other siblings who died in infancy. As a child, he was very religious and by the age of five he reportedly made the decision to dedicate his life to God. St. Padre Pio was an Italian priest who was known for his piety and charity, as well as the gift of the stigmata, which has never been explained.
- Today let us try and live our lives by following his advice:

“Pray, wait, and do not worry. Worrying is useless. God is merciful and will listen to your prayer... Prayer is the best weapon we have; it is the key to the heart of God. You should speak to Jesus, not with your lips but with your heart.”



*Tuesday 24th
September*

St. Gerard Sagredo (980-1046 A.D.) was born in Venice, Italy. From an early age he desired to dedicate his life to God, and as a young man became a Benedictine monk. He first served as abbot at a monastery in Venice, but left to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. While passing through Hungary he met the Hungarian king, St. Stephen, who asked him to stay in his country to evangelize and minister to his people. St. Gerard agreed, and was named Bishop of Csanád and the royal tutor of the Hungarian prince. He ministered tirelessly among the Hungarian people and helped to convert the whole country to Christianity, for which he is called the "Apostle of Hungary." After the death of King St. Stephen there was a pagan uprising against the Christians, and St. Gerard was martyred for the faith along with two others. His death took place on a hill in Budapest which is now named after him; according to one tradition he was placed in a barrel lined with spikes, and rolled down the hill. He was declared a saint in 1083 by Pope St. Gregory VII. St. Gerard Sagredo is the patron saint of Hungary, and his feast day is September 24th.

Today let us think about all of the people around the world who suffer for their faith. Give us courage and confidence to stand up for what we believe in.

St Gerard Sagredo



Wednesday 25th September

Saint Finbar

Finbar was the son of an artisan and a lady of the Irish royal court. Born in Connaught, Ireland, and baptized Lochan, he was educated at Kilmacahil, Kilkenny, where the monks named him Fionnbharr (white head) because of his light hair; he is also known as Bairre and Barr. He went on pilgrimage to Rome with some of the monks, visiting St. David in Wales on the way back. Supposedly, on another visit to Rome the Pope wanted to consecrate him a bishop but was deterred by a vision, notifying the pope that God had reserved that honour to Himself, and Finbar was consecrated from heaven and then returned to Ireland. He may have preached in Scotland but definitely did in southern Ireland and he lived as a hermit on a small island at Lough Eiroe. On the river Lee, Finbar founded a monastery that developed into the city of Cork, of which he was the first bishop. His monastery became famous in southern Ireland and attracted numerous disciples. Many extravagant miracles are attributed to him, and supposedly, the sun did not set for two weeks after he died at Cloyne about the year 633.



*Thursday
26th September*



St Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs

Sts. Cosmas and Damian were brothers, born in Arabia, who had become eminent for their skill in the science of medicine. Being Christians, they were filled with the spirit of charity and never took money for their services. At Egaea in Cilicia, where they lived, they enjoyed the highest esteem of the people. When the persecution under Diocletian broke out, their very prominence rendered them marked objects of persecution. Being apprehended by order of Lysias, governor of Cilicia, they underwent various torments about the year 283. They are patron saints of pharmacists.

Oh glorious martyrs of Christ, Saints Cosmas and Damian, you gave your lives for the love of God, benefiting your fellow man and crowning your martyrdom with an open and loyal profession of your faith. You taught us to love God about all things, and to love our fellow man as ourselves, professing always and without fear, the religion of Jesus. Augmenting among the faithful populace many miracles, you are glorious indeed. Through your intercession, which brings about deliverance of these miracles, we pray to you for your aid in all things. May your patronage never be far from us in the illness of our body and soul. Oh great protectors, Saints Cosmas and Damian, assist us with your love and free us from all evils. Amen.



St. Vincent de Paul was born to a poor peasant family in the French village of Pouy on April 24, 1581. His first formal education was provided by the Franciscans. He did so well, he was hired to tutor the children of a nearby wealthy family. He used the monies he earned teaching to continue his formal studies at the University of Toulouse where he studied theology. Vincent spent his life preaching missions to and providing relief to the poor. He even established hospitals for them. This work became his passion. He later extended his concern and ministry to convicts. The need to evangelise and assist these souls was so great and the demands beyond his own ability to meet that he founded the Ladies of Charity, a lay institute of women, to help, as well as a religious institute of priests - the Congregation of Priests of the Mission, commonly referred to now as the Vincentians. The Vincentians remain with us today with nearly 4,000 members in 86 countries. In addition to his order of Vincentian priests, St. Vincent cofounded the Daughters of Charity along with St. Louise de Marillac. There are more than 18,000 Daughters today serving the needs of the poor in 94 countries. He was eighty years old when he died in Paris on September 27, 1660. He had "become the symbol of the successful reform of the French Church". St. Vincent is sometimes referred to as "The Apostle of Charity" and "The Father of the Poor".

Heavenly Father, inspire all Charitable Workers, especially those who minister, to both the spiritually and the materially poor. O Lord, give us the grace that You bestowed upon, your servant St. Vincent de Paul, to relinquish the temptation of material things, in our holy effort to minister to the poor. Amen.