

A row of lit candles in dark holders, with a white text box overlaid on the right side. The candles are lit, and their 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 16TH SEPTEMBER



- Little is known for certain about the life and ministry of St Ninian. Tradition suggests to us that he was a Briton, born during the 4th century, perhaps in Northern England. He may have travelled to Rome to learn more about the faith, and been welcomed by Pope St Damasus and after lengthy studies, ordained priest and bishop by Pope St Siricius. It is said that St Ninian knew St Martin of Tours. He returned home and settled in southern Scotland, in Galloway, at Whithorn, where he founded his mission. There he built his church, called “Candida Casa” or White House – perhaps a whitewashed stone building. He worked among his own people, the Britons of the border regions and also among the Picts, in the modern Lothian region and in Fife, and so is called the apostle to these groups. As the first known bishop working in Scotland, he occupies a very special place in Scottish religious history.
- Saint Ninian, first to preach the Good News of Christ in our land, hear our prayers and present them to the Lord, whom you served so faithfully. Gain for us a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, abundant vocations to the priesthood and religious life, deeper faith in God’s merciful love, stronger love for God and for our neighbour, a renewal of Christian life in our nation. May we imitate your fidelity to the call of Christ and your passion to share the truth He brought us, and also be found worthy to share the heavenly reward.
Amen.

Tuesday 17th September

Saint Robert Bellarmine



- St Robert Bellarmine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church, was born in Tuscany in 1542. He became a Jesuit and was ordained priest. He was a vigorous defender of the faith at the time of the Reformation. St Robert was made a Cardinal in 1599, but after a disagreement with the Pope was sent as bishop to Capua in 1602. He was a very pastoral bishop, visiting, preaching and teaching, and giving the example of a truly Christian life. He returned to Rome in 1605, and died in 1621.
- God our Father, you gave Robert Bellarmine wisdom and goodness to defend the faith of your Church. By his prayers may we always rejoice in the profession of our faith. Help us to find ways to profess our faith as we come to the end of vocations week.
Amen.

Wednesday 18th September St Joseph of Cupertino

On September 18, the Church celebrates the life of St. Joseph of Cupertino, a mystic who was perhaps most famous for his ability to fly. His father, a poor carpenter, died before his birth and his mother, who was unable to pay the debts, lost her home and gave birth to Joseph in a stable at Cupertino, Italy on June 17, 1603. Joseph began having mystical visions when he was seven, and was often so lost to the world around him that the other children made fun of him giving him the nickname, "open-mouthed" for his gaping manner. He had an irascible temper and read very poorly, giving others the impression that he was good for nothing. Aside from that, he was so continually drawn into ecstasy that it was impossible for him to be attentive to the tasks at hand. Thus, when he secured a job, he lost it very quickly. He finally managed to obtain a post taking care of a stable in a Franciscan convent near Cupertino. Upon realising his holiness and aptitude for penance, humility, and obedience, it was decided that he could begin studying for the priesthood. Joseph was a very poor student, however during his final examination, the examiner happened to ask him a question on the one topic he knew well. He passed and was admitted into the priesthood. It was also soon recognized that though he knew little by way of worldly knowledge and had little capacity to learn, Joseph was infused with a divine knowledge that made him capable of solving some of the most intricate theological quandaries. He died on September 18, 1663 and was canonized in 1767 by Pope Clement XIII. He is the patron of air travellers and students preparing for exams.



Thursday 19th September St Januarius, Bishop and Martyr



St. Januarius was born in Italy and was bishop of Benevento during the Emperor Diocletian persecution. Bishop Januarius went to visit two deacons and two laymen in prison. He was then also imprisoned along with his deacon and lector. They were thrown to the wild beasts, but when the animals did not attack them, they were beheaded. What is believed to be Januarius' blood is kept in Naples, as a relic. It liquifies and bubbles when exposed in the cathedral. Scientists have not been able to explain this miracle to date. St. Januarius lived and died around 305 A.D

Heavenly God, you have granted us your Saint Januarius, that we venerate the memory of this Martyr Saint, give us, we pray, the same courage to live for the glory of your Holy Name, that we may have the joy of his company to sing your praises for all eternity.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen

Friday 20th September Sts Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Hasang and companions.



- The evangelisation of Korea began during the 17th century through a group of lay persons. A strong vital Christian community flourished there under lay leadership until missionaries arrived from the Paris Foreign Mission Society. During the terrible persecutions that occurred in the 19th century (in 1839, 1866, and 1867), one hundred and three members of the Christian community gave their lives as martyrs. Outstanding among these witnesses to the faith were the first Korean priest and pastor, Andrew Kim Taegon, and the lay apostle, Paul Chong Hasang. Among the other martyrs were a few bishops and priests, but for the most part lay people, men and women, married and unmarried, children, young people, and the elderly. All suffered greatly for the Faith and consecrated the rich beginnings of the Church of Korea with their blood as martyrs. Pope John Paul II, during his trip to Korea, canonised these martyrs on May 6, 1984, and inserted their feast into the Calendar of the Universal Church.
- *Today, let us pray to the Lord for peace in the Korean Peninsula, through the intercession of Sts. Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Hasang and companions.*