



Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 18TH NOVEMBER



Monday 20th November

St Edmund of East
Anglia

St Edmund of East Anglia was born around the year 841 AD and ascended to the throne as the King of East Anglia when he was just 14 years old. He received his coronation on Christmas Day in 855 AD, a ceremony performed by Bishop Saint Humbert of Elmham.

Edmund was a remarkable ruler who held deep concerns for the welfare and justice of his people, as well as his own spiritual growth.

Tragically, during one of the many armed conflicts with invading Danes, he was captured. In a cruel demand, he was ordered to surrender his subjects to the pagan invaders, but he staunchly refused, standing firm in his faith. Ultimately, he met his end as a martyr.

Saint Edmund met his death through a brutal ordeal that involved being beaten, whipped, and shot with arrows, to the extent that he appeared covered in them, resembling a hedgehog.

His execution occurred in Hoxne, Suffolk, England, on November 20th. He was buried in Hoxne, and his relics underwent several relocations over the centuries.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God our Father. Amen.

Tuesday 21st November



St Agnes of Assisi

Born Caterina Offreducia, Agnes was the younger sister of Saint Clare, her first follower. When Caterina left home two weeks after Clare's departure, their family attempted to bring her back by force. They tried to drag her out of the monastery, but her body suddenly became so rigid that several knights could not budge it. Her uncle Monaldo tried to force her but was temporarily paralyzed. The knights then left Caterina in peace. Saint Francis himself gave Clare's sister the name Agnes because she was gentle like a young lamb. Agnes matched her sister in devotion, prayer and in willingness to endure the strict penances that characterized the Poor Ladies' lives at San Damiano. In 1221, a group of Benedictine nuns in Monticelli near Florence asked to become Poor Ladies. Saint Francis asked Agnes to become abbess of that monastery. Agnes soon wrote a letter about how much she missed Clare and the other nuns at San Damiano. After establishing other monasteries of Poor Ladies in various parts of Italy, Agnes was recalled to San Damiano in 1253, as Clare lay dying. A few months later Agnes followed Clare in death, and was canonized in 1255.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Wednesday 22nd
November



Saint Cecilia

St Cecilia is the patron saint of music and musicians. She was born from a wealthy family but promised herself to a life of devotion to God. Cecilia helped those in need and was true to her faith even in the most challenging of circumstances. She was facing certain death for practising her beliefs but she worked tirelessly to spread the word of God. Tomorrow Christians around the country will raise awareness of those still facing persecution today for their religious beliefs. We pray to our Father to give us the courage of St. Cecilia to be true to our beliefs and to work tirelessly for the benefit of others.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Thursday 23rd
November

Saint Clement I,
Pope

St. Clement I was Bishop of Rome in the late first century AD. He is listed by Tertullian as the bishop of Rome, holding office from 88 AD to his death in the first Apostolic Father of the Church.

Few details are known about Clement's life. Clement was said to have been a disciple of Peter the Apostle, and he is known to have been a leading member of the church in Rome in the late 1st century.

Clement was banished from Rome to the Chersonesus during the reign of Emperor Trajan and was set to work in a stone quarry. Finding on his arrival that the quarry was suffering from lack of water, he knelt in prayer. Looking up, he saw a lamb standing where the lamb had stood and struck the ground with his pickaxe, releasing a stream of clear water.

Prayer for the Holy Father

Lord, source of eternal life and truth, give to Your shepherd, a spirit of courage and right judgment, a spirit of knowledge and wisdom. By governing with fidelity those entrusted to his care may he be able to act as successor to the apostle Peter and vicar of Christ, build Your church into a sacrament of unity, love, and peace for the whole world.

***We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.
Amen.***

Friday 24th November

St. Andrew Dũng-Lạc
and his Companions

Andrew Dũng-Lạc, a Catholic convert ordained to the priesthood, was one of the many people martyred in Vietnam between 1820 and 1862. Members of this group gave their lives for Christ in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. They were beatified during four different occasions between 1900 and 1950 and canonized during the papacy of Saint John Paul II.

Christianity came to Vietnam through the Portuguese. Jesuits opened a permanent mission at Da Nang in 1615. They ministered to Japanese Catholics who had been driven from Japan.

Severe persecutions were launched at least three times in the 19th century. In the six decades after 1820, between 100,000 and 300,000 Catholics were killed or subjected to great hardship. Foreign missionaries martyred in the first half of the century included priests of the Paris Mission Society, and Spanish Dominican priests and nuns. Let us continue to pray for people across the world who continue to be persecuted for their religious beliefs.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Friday 25th November



St. Catherine of Alexandria

The young saint was born around 287 in Alexandria, Egypt. At that time, Alexandria was one of the finest cities in the world, and a centre of learning and culture as well as faith.

Christian tradition states she was of noble birth, possibly a princess. As a member of the aristocracy, she was also educated and was an avid scholar. Around the age of fourteen, she had a moving vision of Mary and the infant Jesus, and she decided to become a Christian. She was intelligent and gifted. When the emperor Maxentius began persecuting Christians, she visited him to denounce his cruelty.

Rather than order her execution, Maxentius summoned fifty orators and philosophers to debate with her. However, Catherine was moved by the power of the Holy Spirit and spoke in the defence of her faith. Her words were so moving that several converted to Christianity. Maxentius was immediately executed. Unable to defeat her rhetorically or to intimidate her into renouncing her belief, the emperor ordered her to be tortured and imprisoned.

Prayer to St. Catherine

Gracious and loving God, we give you thanks for the tradition and example of St. Catherine of Alexandria.

Give us grace to pursue her love of purity, to strive for her strength and courage in the face of temptation, to her abhorrence of the world's temptations and sinful desires, and to her faithfulness. Empower us to break the wheel of worldly suffering and allow our lives to radiate through our lives, so that your glory may shine ever more brightly. We seek your presence to share in the ministry and worship of this parish, and we welcome those who come in your name.

All this we pray through Jesus Christ, our servant leader, who is one with you and the Holy Spirit.

Amen