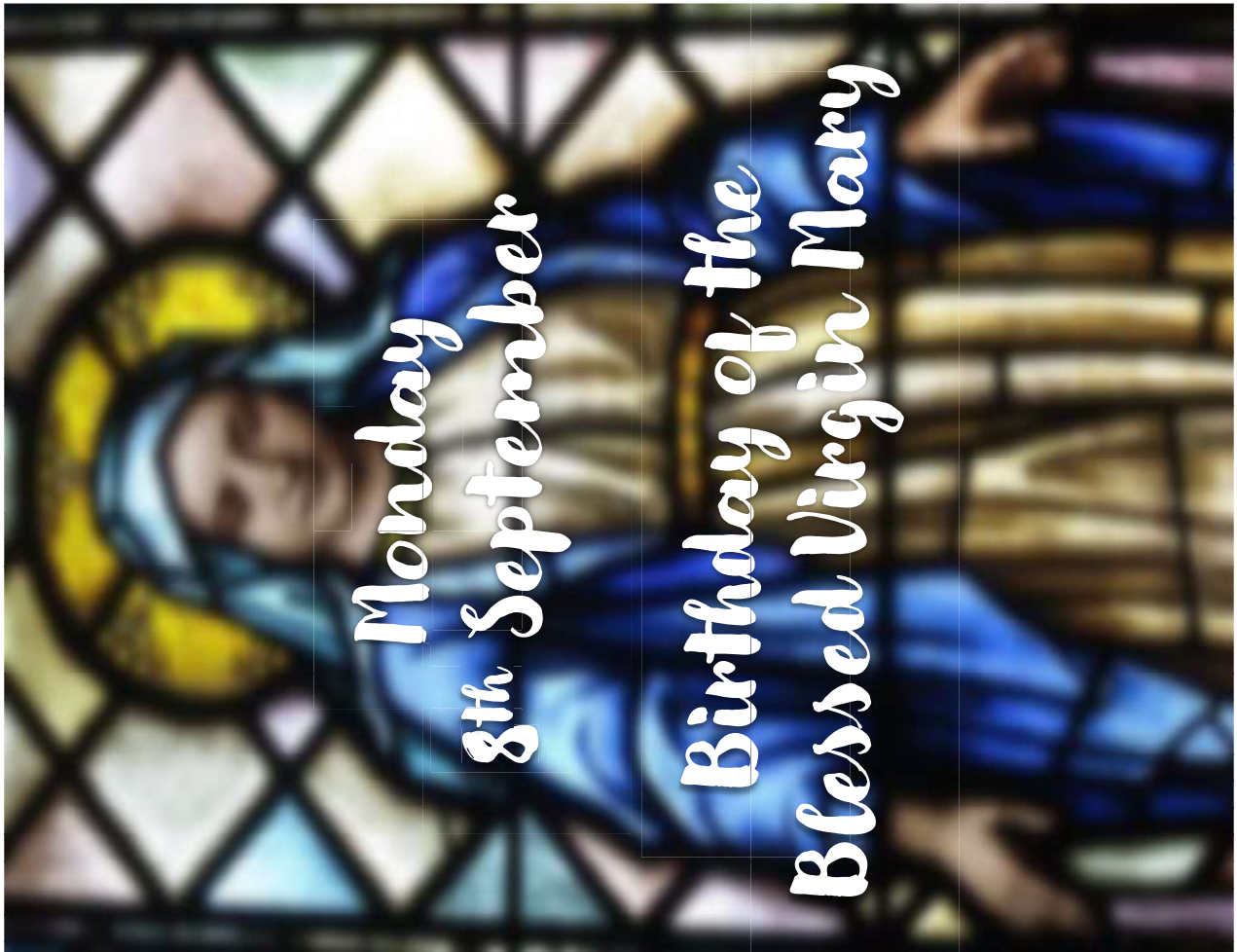




Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 8TH SEPTEMBER



Monday 8th September

Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Clearly there is no historical record of the birth of Mary. The Church does believe, however, that from the very moment of her conception she was totally free from sin and remained free of sin for her whole life. It was not acceptable that Jesus, the Son of God, should be conceived in a body tainted by sin. Her birth, then, is clearly something to celebrate. The Church, too, has given names to her parents – Joachim and Ann, whose feast is celebrated on 26 July.

*Father of mercy,
give your people help and strength from heaven.
The birth of the Virgin Mary's Son
was the dawn of our salvation.
May this celebration of her birthday
bring us closer to lasting peace.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.*



Tuesday 9th September

Feast of St. Peter Claver

St. Peter Claver, SJ, was a member of the Society of Jesus and is the patron of African missions and of interracial justice, due to his work with slaves in Colombia. He was born to a prosperous family in Verdu, Spain, and earned his first degree in Barcelona. He entered the Jesuits in 1601.

St. Peter Claver ministered in Cartagena, which was one of two ports where slaves from Africa arrived to be sold in South America. When a ship arrived, Peter first begged for fruits, biscuits, or sweets to bring to the slaves. He then went on board with translators to bring his gifts as well as his skills as a doctor and teacher. Claver entered the holds of the ships and would not leave until every person received a measure of care. Peter gave short instruction in the Catholic faith and baptised as many as he could. In this way he could prevail on the slave owners to give humane treatment to fellow Christians. Peter Claver baptised more than 300,000 slaves by 1651, when he was sickened by the plague, dying 7th September 1654.

Today let us ask St. Peter Claver for something of his spirit of service to others and total forgetfulness of self.

Amen.



Wednesday 10th September Vocations Week

Today, let us pray for the vocations of the young people in our Diocese.

Gracious and loving God you have blessed us with the privilege of becoming educators. We ask that you provide us with all that we need in accepting this awesome responsibility. We pray that we will be open to your spirit who is our source of strength as we witness to our pupils your love for each of them and your desire for them to be happy and to live a full life.

We ask your help so we may guide and encourage our pupils to believe that they each have a special calling and to use their gifts and talents for others. We pray, Heavenly Father, that our pupils will discover and respond enthusiastically to your desire for them whether it be to the vocation of single, married, ordained or consecrated life. We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus through the grace of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Thursday 17th September Vocations Week

To serve the Church as a priest or a religious is indeed a humbling honour which no one merits but which Our Lord chooses for us. We must therefore pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send labourers into His vineyard, and we should always pray for vocations to serve the Church in the priesthood and the religious life.

Lord, my God and my loving Father, You have made me to know You, to love You, to serve You, and thereby to find and to fulfil myself. I know that You are in all things, and that every path can lead me to You. But of them all, there is one especially by which You want me to come to You.

Since I will do what You want of me, I pray You, send your Holy Spirit to me: into my mind, to show me what You want of me; into my heart, to give me the determination to do it, and to do it with all my love, with all my mind, and with all my strength right to the end.
Amen

Friday 12th September

The Most Holy name of Mary

"And the name of the virgin was Mary." (St. Luke, I, 27)

In this simple phrase, St. Luke sums up the greatness of Mary, as epitomised in her holy name. That the Church recognises this is quite apparent when we realise the numerous times the name of Mary occurs in her various prayer, invocations, and seasonal liturgy.

The name of Mary was chosen by the Most High for the fairest of the daughters of Eve, the mother of His Divine Son, and was revealed to Anne and Joachim by the angel Gabriel who was later to announce to their child the great privilege accorded her by God.

Today we pray for all mothers and female carers as they live out their vocation to care for the young as we say: Hail Mary...

