



Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 17TH NOVEMBER



Monday 17th November

The Feast of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary - In her short life, Elizabeth manifested such great love for the poor and suffering that she has become the patroness of Catholic charities and of the Secular Franciscan Order. The daughter of the King of Hungary, Elizabeth chose a life of penance and modesty when a life of leisure and luxury could easily have been hers. This choice endeared her in the hearts of the common people throughout Europe.

Under the spiritual direction of a Franciscan friar, she led a life of prayer, sacrifice, and service to the poor and sick. Seeking to become one with the poor, she wore simple clothing. Daily she would take bread to hundreds of the poorest in the land who came to her gate.

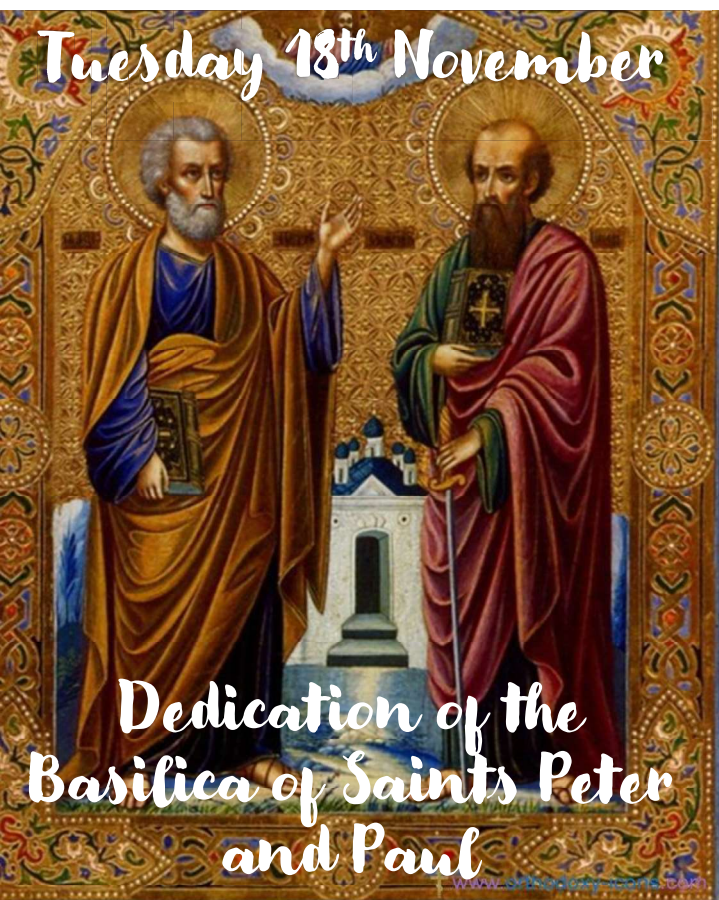
In 1228, Elizabeth joined the Secular Franciscan Order, spending the remaining few years of her life caring for the poor in a hospital which she founded in honour of Saint Francis of Assisi. Elizabeth's health declined, and she died before her 24th birthday in 1231. Her great popularity resulted in her canonization four years later.

Prayer of St. Elizabeth of Hungary

Almighty God, by whose grace your servant Elizabeth of Hungary recognized and honoured Jesus in the poor of this world:

Grant that we, following her example, may with love and gladness serve those in any need or trouble, in the name and for the sake of through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.



Dedication of the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul - The anniversaries of dedication of these two basilicas were celebrated as early as the twelfth century.

Saint Peter's Basilica was originally built in 323 by the emperor Constantine. The basilica was constructed over the tomb of Peter the Apostle, the Church's first Pope. After standing for more than a thousand years, Pope Julius II ordered the building to be torn down due to structural concerns. The construction of the new church spanned over 200 years before its completion. It was dedicated on Nov. 18, 1626.

St. Paul's Basilica in the Ostian Way was also built over his tomb and was rebuilt in the nineteenth century. It was originally located outside the original walls of Rome and was also originally built by the emperor Constantine but it was destroyed by fire in 1823. Donations from around the world made the reconstruction possible. Pope Pius IX consecrated the Basilica in 1854.

Prayer

*Defend your Church, O Lord,
by the protection of the holy Apostles,
that, as she received from them
the beginnings of her knowledge of things divine,
so through them she may receive,
even to the end of the world,
an increase in heavenly grace.
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.



Matilda was born in 1241 or 1242 in the Castle of Helfta. She was the Baron's third daughter. When she was seven she went with her mother to visit her sister Gertrude in the convent of Rodersdorf. She was so enchanted by this environment that she ardently desired to belong to it. She entered as a schoolgirl and in 1258 became a nun at the convent, which in the meantime had moved to Helfta, to the property of the Hackeborns. Illumined by the divine gift of mystic contemplation, Matilda wrote many prayers. She was a teacher of faithful doctrine and deep humility, a counsellor, comforter and guide in discernment. During her long life which she spent in the convent, Matilda was afflicted with continuous and intense bouts of suffering, to which she added the very harsh penances chosen for the conversion of sinners. In this manner she participated in the Lord's Passion until the end of her life. This Saint had a striking capacity for living the various elements of the Liturgy, even the simplest and bringing it into the daily life of the convent.

A religious painting depicting a scene with a king, a woman in an orange cloak, and a child on steps. The king is seated on the left, wearing a crown and a dark robe. The woman in the orange cloak is standing in the center, looking down at a small child who is kneeling on the steps. Another figure is visible in the background on the right. The scene is set in a dimly lit interior with stone steps.

Thursday 20th
November

St Edmund of East
Anglia

St Edmund of East Anglia was born around the year 841 AD and he 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 presided over 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 Danish forces, he was captured. In a cruel demand, he was ordered to surrender his Christian 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 to be covered in them, resembling a hedgehog.

His execution occurred in Hoxne, Suffolk, England, on November 20, 869 AD. 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 them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Friday 21st November

Presentation of Blessed
Virgin Mary

The Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated annually on November 21st, commemorates the presentation of the Blessed Virgin as a child by her parents in the Temple in Jerusalem. Before Mary's birth, her parents received a heavenly message that they would bear a child. In thanksgiving for the God's gift of Mary's birth, they brought her to the Temple to consecrate their only daughter to The Lord.

Hail Mary...