



Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 9TH MARCH

Monday 9th March



Commemoration of Saint Frances of Rome

OFFICIAL

Frances was a devoted and loving wife. She longed for a lifestyle of prayer and service, so she organized a group of women to minister to the needs of Rome's poor. Born of wealthy parents, Frances found herself attracted to the religious life during her youth. But her parents objected and a young nobleman was selected to be her husband. Frances fell ill for a time, but this apparently only deepened her commitment to the suffering people she met. The years passed, and Frances gave birth to two sons and a daughter. With the new responsibilities of family life, the young mother turned her attention more to the needs of her own household. The family flourished under Frances' care, but within a few years a great plague began to sweep across Italy. It struck Rome with devastating cruelty and left Frances' second son dead. In an effort to help alleviate some of the suffering, Frances used all her money and sold her possessions to buy whatever the sick might possibly need. Later, Frances' daughter died, and the saint opened a section of her house as a hospital. Frances became more and more convinced that this way of life was so necessary for the world,

Reflection:

Looking at the exemplary life of fidelity to God and devotion to her fellow human beings which Frances of Rome was blessed to lead, one cannot help but be reminded of Saint Teresa of Calcutta, who loved Jesus Christ in prayer and also in the poor. The life of Frances of Rome calls each of us not only to look deeply for God in prayer, but also to carry our devotion to Jesus living in the suffering of our world. Frances shows us that this life need not be restricted to those bound by vows.

Tuesday 10th March



Saint John Ogilvie

John Ogilvie's noble Scottish family was partly Catholic and partly Presbyterian. His father raised him as a Calvinist, sending him to the continent to be educated. He decided to become Catholic and was received into the Church at Louvain, Belgium, in 1596 at the age of 17.

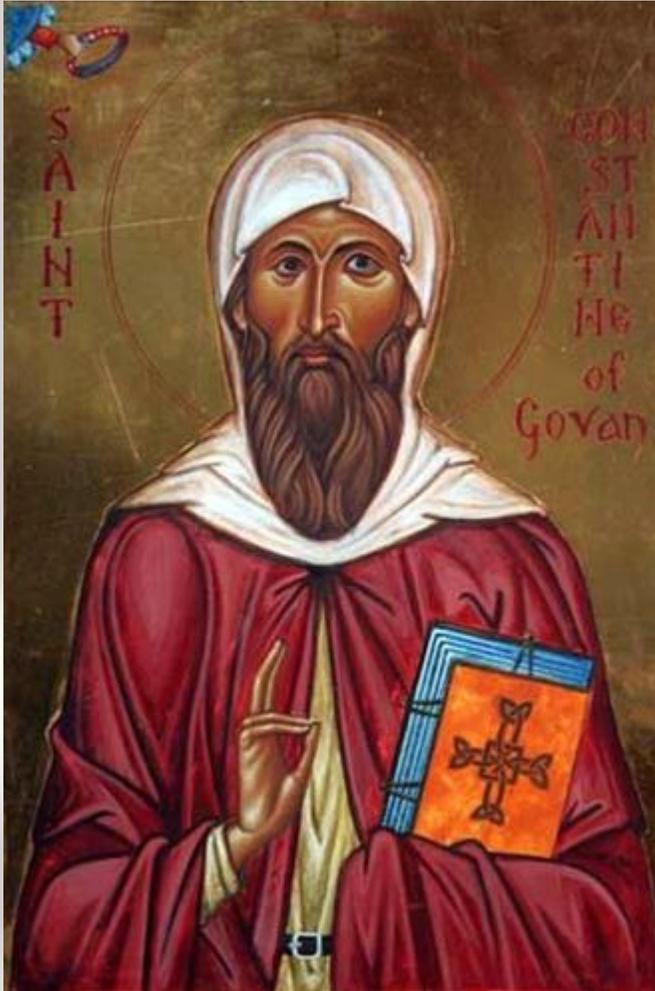
John secretly entered Scotland posing as a horse trader or a soldier returning from the wars in Europe. Unable to do significant work among the relatively few Catholics in Scotland, John made his way back to Paris to consult his superiors. Rebuked for having left his assignment in Scotland, he was sent back. He warmed to the task before him and had some success in making converts and in secretly serving Scottish Catholics. But he was soon betrayed, arrested, and brought before the court. Condemned to death as a traitor, he was faithful to the end, even when on the scaffold he was offered his freedom and a fine living if he would deny his faith. His courage in prison and in his martyrdom was reported throughout Scotland. John Ogilvie was canonized in 1976, becoming the first Scottish saint since 1250.

Reflection

John came of age when neither Catholics nor Protestants were willing to tolerate one another. Turning to Scripture, he found words that enlarged his vision. Although he became a Catholic and died for his faith, he understood the meaning of “small-c catholic,” the wide range of believers who embrace Christianity. Even now he undoubtedly rejoices in the ecumenical spirit fostered by the Second Vatican Council and joins us in our prayer for unity with all believers.

Wednesday 14th March

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Born a Scottish prince, the son of King Kenneth II of Strathclyde, Constantine led a life of vice until his conversion, possibly after hearing the evangelizing preaching of Saint Columba and Saint Kentigern.

He was married, and the father of at least one son, and briefly king of Stathclyde. When his wife died, he abdicated his position and founded a monastery at Govan on the river Clyde. He became a monk there, and evangelized the region.

Constantine bled to death in 874 in a cave near Crail after his right arm was cut off by Danish pirates

He is considered a martyr in for defending his Christian land against pagan invaders

Saint Constantine II

Thursday 11th March

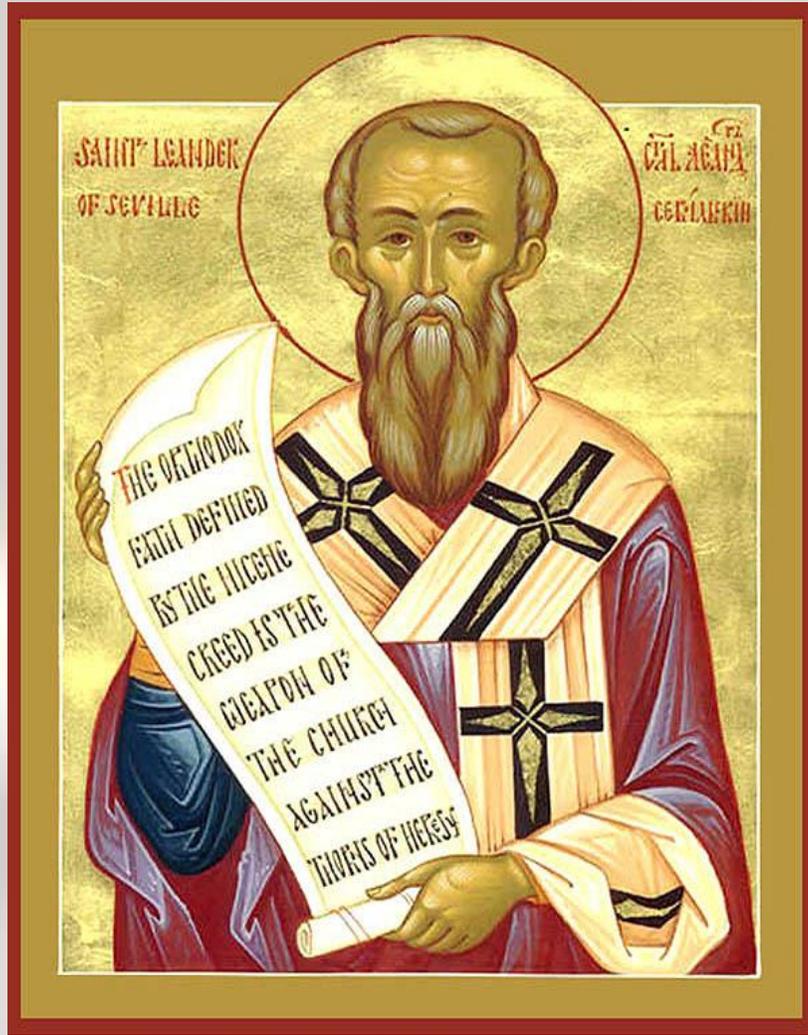
OFFICIAL



Seraphina was born poor, and though she stayed that way, she still found ways to help those in worse shape than herself. She was a pretty girl but she lived as a hermit in her home, doing chores, giving to the poor when she could such as spinning, sewing, and praying through the nights. Seraphina's father died when she was very young. Soon after, she was stricken with a condition that made any movement painful; she had to be carried everywhere on a board. Seraphina lived the rest of her life in constant suffering, and neglect, which she turned over to God in her constant prayers. She never joined an order but lived her life under Benedictine Rule. She was devoted to Saint Gregory the Great who suffered from a condition like hers. She received a vision from Saint Gregory who foretold the date of her death. She died of natural causes.

Saint Seraphina

Friday 13th March



Saint Leander of Seville

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Leander was the son of Severianus and Theodora, known for their piety. He was the elder brother of Saint Isidore of Seville, Saint Fulgentius of Ecija, and Saint Florentina of Cartagena. Monk at Seville, Spain. Bishop of Seville.

He converted Saint Hermengild and Prince Reccared, sons of the Arian Visigoth king Leovigild, who then exiled Leander to Constantinople from 579 to 582. There he became close friends with the papal legate who later became Pope Saint Gregory the Great. Leander recommended that Gregory write his famous commentary (Moralia) on the Book of Job.

When Reccared ascended the throne, Leander was allowed to return to Seville. He worked against Arianism, and presided over the Third Council of Toledo in 589. He revised and unified the Spanish liturgy, and his boundless energy and steady faith led the Visigoths back to orthodox Christianity. Leander wrote an influential Rule for nuns. He introduced the Nicene Creed to Mass in the west and he is honored as a Doctor of the Faith by the Church in Spain.

Reflection

Heavenly Father, help me today to see how I can be a great influence on other people. Direct my words and actions so that I may be a power for good. Help me to see others as you see them.

Amen