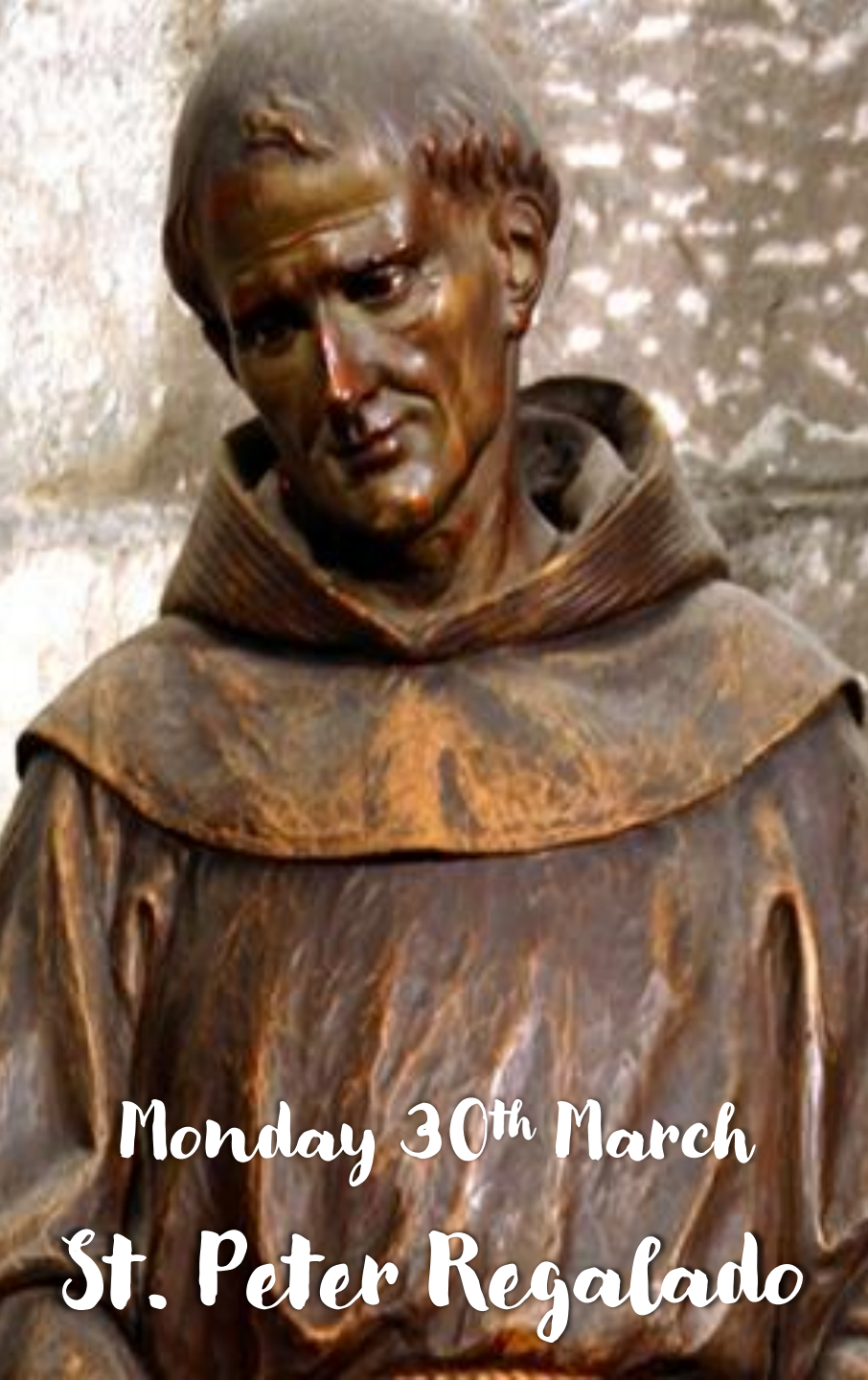




Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 30TH MARCH



Monday 30th March
St. Peter Regalado

OFFICIAL

Peter came from a wealthy and pious family in Valladolid, Spain. At the age of 13, he was allowed to enter the Conventual Franciscans. Shortly after his ordination, he was made superior of the friary in Aguilar. He became part of a group of friars who wanted to lead a life of greater poverty and penance. In 1442, he was appointed head of all the Spanish Franciscans in his reform group. Peter led the friars by his example. A special love of the poor and the sick characterised Peter. Miraculous stories are told about his charity to the poor. For example, the bread never seemed to run out as long as Peter had hungry people to feed. Throughout most of his life, Peter went hungry; he lived only on bread and water. Immediately after his death on March 31, 1456, his grave became a place of pilgrimage. Peter was canonised in 1746.

Reflection:

Peter was an effective leader of the friars because he did not become ensnared in anger over the sins of others. Peter helped sinning friars rearrange the priorities in their lives and dedicate themselves to living the gospel of Jesus Christ as they had vowed. This patient correction is an act of charity available to everyone, may we always be humble in our dealings with others.

Our Father ...

Tuesday 31st March



St. Stephen of Mar Saba

OFFICIAL

St. Stephen of Mar Saba was the nephew of Saint John Damascene, who introduced the young boy to monastic life beginning at age 10. When he reached 24, Stephen served the community in a variety of ways, including guest master. After some time he asked permission to live a hermit's life. The answer from the abbot was yes and no: Stephen could follow his preferred lifestyle during the week, but on weekends he was to offer his skills as a counsellor. Stephen placed a note on the door of his cell: "Forgive me, Fathers, in the name of the Lord, but please do not disturb me except on Saturdays and Sundays."

Despite his calling to prayer and quiet, Stephen displayed uncanny skills with people and was a valued spiritual guide. His biographer and disciple wrote about Stephen: "Whatever help, spiritual or material, he was asked to give, he gave. He received and honoured all with the same kindness. He possessed nothing and lacked nothing. In total poverty he possessed all things."

Reflection

St. Stephen of Mar Saba knew the value of solitude. Even though he was generous and served whoever came to him, he relished his time alone. Maybe we can learn from him the value of solitude and seek it out a little more in our lives.

Our Father ...

Wednesday 1st April

OFFICIAL

Holy Wednesday

ALSO KNOWN AS THE SPY WEDNESDAY

It is the day Judas Iscariot, a disciple turned betrayer agreed to show the chief priest where they could easily capture Jesus in exchange for 30 pieces of silver.

Wednesday of Holy Week is sometimes called Spy Wednesday, when we commemorate the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, one of the 12 disciples.

On the Wednesday before his death, Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper. As he sat at the supper table with his disciples, a woman named Mary anointed Jesus' head and feet with a costly oil of spikenard. The disciples were indignant, asking why the oil was not instead sold and the money given to the poor. But Judas Iscariot wanted to keep the money for himself. Then Judas went to the leading body of the Jews, the Sanhedrin and offered to deliver Jesus to them in exchange for money. From this moment on, Judas sought an opportunity to betray Jesus

"Spy Wednesday"

Thursday 2nd April

OFFICIAL



Holy THURSDAY

He said to them,
"Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am, if I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have **given you a model to follow**, so that as I have done for you, you should also do."

— THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN 13:12-15

Holy Thursday is the commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus Christ, when he established the sacrament of Holy Communion prior to his arrest and crucifixion. It also commemorates His institution of the priesthood. The holy day falls on the Thursday before Easter and is part of Holy Week. Jesus celebrated the dinner as a Passover feast. Christ would fulfill His role as the Christian victim of the Passover for all to be saved by His final sacrifice. The central observance of Holy Thursday is the ritual reenactment of the Last Supper at Mass. This event is celebrated at every Mass, as part of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, but it is specially commemorated on Holy Thursday.

He also establishes the special priesthood for his disciples, which is distinct from the "priesthood of all believers." Christ washed the feet of his Disciples, who would become the first priests. During the Passover meal, Jesus breaks bread and gives it to his Disciples, uttering the words, "This is my body, which is given for you." Subsequently, he passes a cup filled with wine. He then says, "This is my blood..." It is believed those who eat of Christ's flesh and blood shall have eternal life.

Holy Thursday