



Prayers for week ahead

WEEKS BEGINNING 22ND & 29TH JUNE



Monday 22nd
June
St Thomas More,
Martyr

OFFICIAL

- St. Thomas More's life as a saint is defined by his unwavering commitment to his conscience and his Catholic faith, culminating in his martyrdom. While he achieved great worldly success as the Lord Chancellor of England, More maintained a deeply ascetic and prayerful inner life, privately wearing a hair shirt and dedicating hours to spiritual reflection. His sanctity was truly tested when King Henry VIII split from Rome to establish the Church of England. Refusing to take the Oath of Succession, which acknowledged Henry as the Supreme Head of the Church and repudiated papal authority, More was imprisoned in the Tower of London. Throughout his trial and eventual execution in 1535, he displayed profound Christian charity and fortitude, famously declaring on the scaffold that he died "the King's good servant, but God's first."

Tuesday 23rd June St Thomas Garnet

- St. Thomas Garnet's life as a Catholic saint and martyr was defined by a perilous devotion to keeping the outlawed Catholic faith alive in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Born into a prominent, devout family—his uncle was the Jesuit superior Henry Garnet—he felt a distinct calling to the priesthood despite the severe dangers of the era. He crossed the English Channel to study at the English College in Saint-Omer and later Valladolid, Spain, where he was ordained in 1599. Returning to England on a secretive and hazardous mission under the alias "Thomas Harrison," he spent years traveling through the countryside to minister to recusant Catholics, secretly administering the sacraments. His missionary work was cut short in 1605 when he was arrested in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot—a conspiracy he had no part in—leading to a grueling nine-month imprisonment in the Tower of London followed by banishment to Europe.



P. Thomas Garnet nral de Nollingham, fue colegial de este Cole y bolu
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l... por los herejes en junio. A. de 1605



Wednesday 24th
June
The nativity of St
John the Baptist

OFFICIAL

- **The birthday of St. John the Baptist**
- Christ said that John the Baptist was the greatest of the sons of men. He has two feast days dedicated to himself. One in August which celebrates his death, and today we celebrate his birth.
- St John's main task was to proclaim the fulfilment of all prophecies - the coming of the incarnate God. He spread this message with great courage. Being a prophet was a difficult job. Sometimes people did not like what they had to say as they often challenged people to change their way of life.
- How often have I been challenged to change my own ways? Has anyone ever commented on my behaviour or attitudes? How have I responded?
- Lord, give me the grace to accept that sometimes I can hurt others through my words or actions. Help me to see that I have the power for good as well as evil and so help me to make wise choices today that are life giving to others. Amen.



Thursday 25th
June
St William of
Vercelli

OFFICIAL

William was born to the Italian nobility. He was orphaned as an infant, and raised by relatives. William was a pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela, Spain at age 14. There he decided on a life devoted to God. William became a hermit for two years at Monte Solicoli where he healed a blind man. He was a friend of Saint John of Pulsano. He started a pilgrimage to the Holy Lands, but discerned that he would be of more use to God in Italy.

William was a hermit at Monte Vergiliano (Monte Vergine). There his reputation for holiness attracted many disciples. In 1119 he formed them into the Hermits of Monte Vergine (Williamites) with a Rule based on the Benedictines; five other houses were formed by its members during William's life, but only the original survives today. When some of the hermits began to grumble that William's austerities were too hard to match, he, Saint John, and a small handful of brothers left in order not to be a cause of dissension.

When their hermitage burned, the Williamites moved to Monte Cognato, and into the area of Naples, Italy. He became advisor to King Roger I of Naples who built him a hermitage at Salerno, Italy. Founded monasteries in the Naples region.

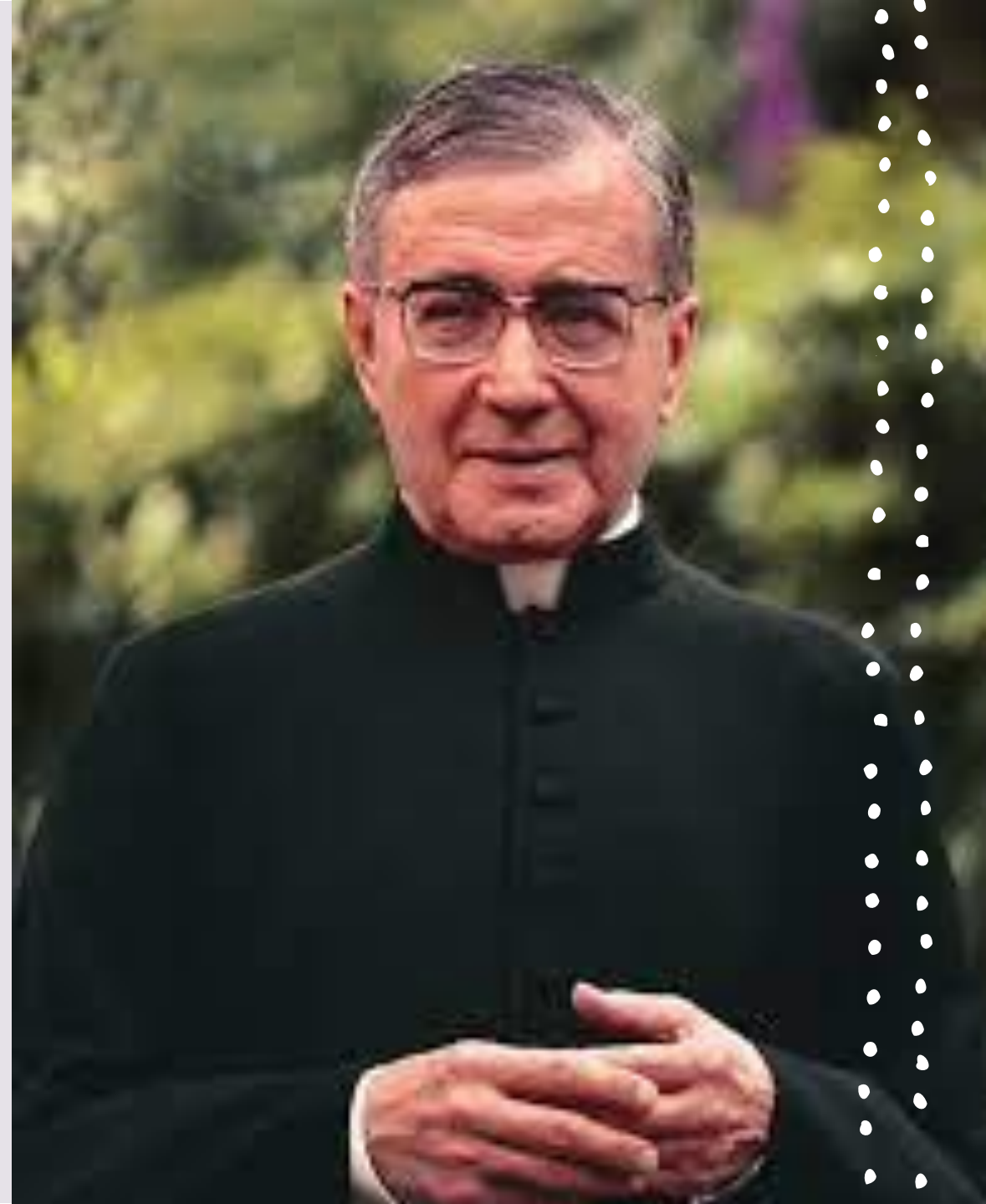
Legend says that William began mining the stone and digging the foundations for the church on Montevergine when his only companion and helper was a single donkey. One evening, a wolf charged from the forest, killed and ate the donkey. William ordered the wolf to take the donkey's place. The wolf, understanding that he had interrupted God's work, bowed his head, and began hauling the loads of stone. Tradition says that the same wolf still prowls the mountain, ready to help those who are in danger and call upon the name of the Virgin Mary.

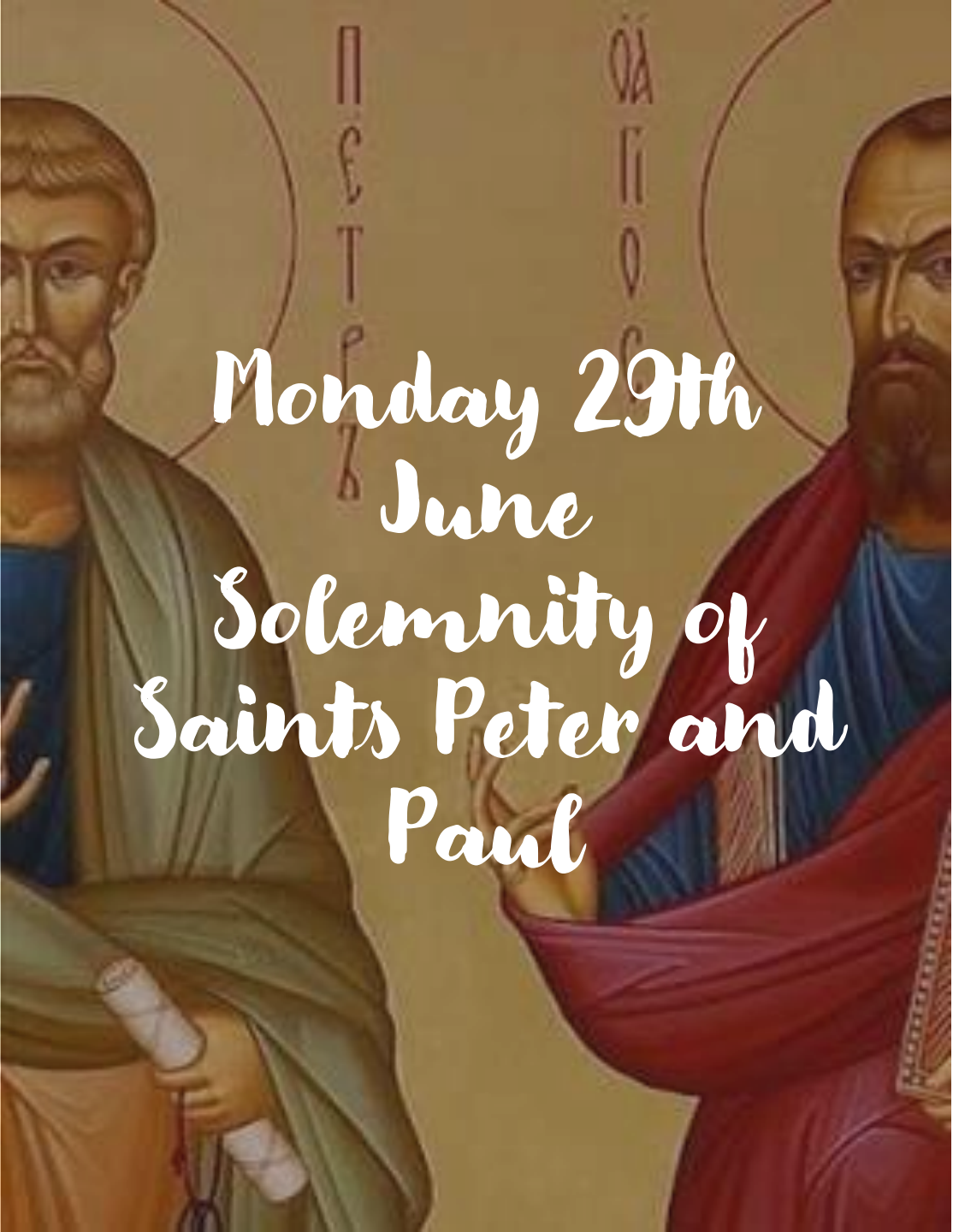
Friday 26th June - St Josemaria Escriva

Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer y Albás (1902-1975) founded Opus Dei, an organization of laypeople and priests dedicated to the teaching that everyone is called to holiness by God and that ordinary life can result in sanctity. He was Canonized in 2002 by Pope John Paul II, who counted Escriva a living witness to practical Christianity.

O God, through the mediation of Mary our Mother, you granted your priest Saint Josemaria countless graces, choosing him as a most faithful instrument to found Opus Dei, a way of sanctification in daily work and in the fulfillment of the Christian's ordinary duties.

Grant that I too may learn to turn all the circumstances and events of my life into occasions of loving you and serving the Church, the Pope and all souls with joy and simplicity, lighting up the pathways of this earth with faith and love.





*Monday 29th
June
Solemnity of
Saints Peter and
Paul*

- St. Peter and St. Paul are revered as the co-founders and twin pillars of the Catholic Church, each exemplifying a distinct path to sanctity and martyrdom in Rome. St. Peter, chosen by Christ as the "rock" upon which the Church was built, serves as the model of pastoral authority and the first Pope; despite his human frailties and initial denials of Jesus, his deep repentance led him to fearlessly shepherd the early Christian community until he was crucified upside down, deeming himself unworthy to die in the same manner as his Lord. St. Paul, conversely, transformed from a fierce persecutor of early Christians into the ultimate "Apostle to the Gentiles" following a dramatic vision of the risen Christ on the road to Damascus. His tireless missionary journeys across the Mediterranean and his foundational New Testament epistles shaped early Christian theology, culminating in his own martyrdom by beheading. Together, their shared feast day on June 29 celebrates how two vastly different men were united in their absolute devotion to spreading the Gospel, ultimately sealing their witness to the Catholic faith with their blood.

- The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church—collectively celebrated as saints on June 30—were the foundational seeds of the early Christian community in Rome, suffering a brutal collective martyrdom under the Emperor Nero in the year 64. Following a devastating fire that swept through the city, Nero falsely scapegoated the city's Christians, resulting in an unprecedented, horrific wave of public executions where these early believers were covered in wild beast skins to be torn by dogs, or fastened to crosses and set ablaze to serve as human torches for the emperor's nightly garden parties. As Catholic saints, their lives and tragic deaths represent the supreme triumph of faith over secular tyranny, demonstrating absolute fidelity to Christ in the face of sudden and terrifying persecution. Though individual names of many of these men and women are lost to history, their communal witness side-by-side with the Apostles Peter and Paul cemented Rome as the epicenter of Catholic Christendom and left a lasting legacy of courage that inspired generations of faithful to stand firm in their beliefs.



Tuesday 30th
June

**First Martyrs of the
Holy Roman Church**

A Holiday Prayer

- Thank You Lord for the joy of teaching and learning as well as the challenges it offers. Lord we pray that You would guard and guide all of our school community and pray that each one will come to a knowledge of and understanding of You.
- Thank You also for school holidays and the opportunity to 'recharge' our batteries - and for the precious times of refreshment that school holidays offer, and we pray that You would use this period away from school and its responsibilities, to be a time of refreshment and renewal, not only for our bodies but also, for our souls and our spirits too.
- We pray that this holiday will bring us to be even closer to You - that it will enable us to re-examine our priorities and principles, our purpose and our perspectives in life. We pray that this will be a time when our minds will be refreshed so that we are able to return to school renewed and refreshed and ready to face the challenges of a new term.
- We pray this will be a time when we draw ever closer to Jesus, our Saviour, and that this may be a time when we grow in grace and have opportunity to listen intently to Your still small voice and to rest in Your promises - to just be still and to know that you are God. Thank You for being our Saviour, in Jesus name we pray. Amen

