

SAINT OF THE DAY



JUNE

June 1: *St. Justin Martyr*

St. Justin was one of the earliest Christian apologists. An apologist is someone who defends the faith. He grew up in a pagan family in Palestine in the 2nd century. Justin was educated in Greek philosophy, but he converted to Christianity after reading the Scriptures. He was also influenced by the faith of Christian martyrs. Of Justin's many written works, only two have survived, *First Apology* and *Dialogue with Trypho*. These writings show Justin to be a brilliant defender of the faith. He traveled to Rome and founded a Christian school. Because of this, he was arrested and martyred in 165.

June 2: *Ss. Marcellinus and Peter, Martyrs*

Marcellinus, a priest, and Peter, an exorcist, lived during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. Little is known of their lives. They were arrested and martyred together in 304. Their names are spoken during the first Eucharistic prayer of the Roman Canon.

June 3: *St. Charles Lwanga and Companions, Martyrs*

Charles Lwanga grew up in Uganda in the late 19th century. As a boy, he served as a page in the court of King Mwanga II. In 1885, the king began to persecute converts to Christianity. He executed his chief advisor after discovering that he was a Christian. Charles was promoted to take his place. That same day, Charles was baptized as a Catholic in secret. Charles converted many of those around him over the next several months. In 1886, Charles and many others declared their faith in front of the royal court. They were condemned to death. Charles, along with twelve Catholics and nine Anglicans was forced to walk thirty-seven miles to the place of execution. They were martyred together on June 3, 1886 when Charles was twenty-one years old.

June 4: *St. Francis Caracciolo*

Born near Naples, Italy in 1563, St. Francis Caracciolo suffered from a skin disease much like leprosy. He prayed for healing, and made a vow to give his life to God. When he was twenty-two years old, he became a priest and his skin disease was miraculously cured. Together with John Augustine Adorno, he founded the Minor Clerks Regular as an order focused on adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, poverty and penance. Today, the Adorno Fathers continue to thrive around the world. St. Francis Caracciolo died in 1608.

June 5: *St. Boniface, Bishop and Martyr*

St. Boniface was born in England in the 7th century, but he spent his life evangelizing the pagan tribes in Germany. He became a Benedictine monk while still a young man and set out for Germany in 716. For the rest of his life, he traveled around Germany, founding churches and monasteries. In 754, Boniface was preaching and baptizing in Frisia when he was attacked and killed by a group of pagan soldiers. St. Boniface is the patron of Germany.

June 6: *St. Norbert, Bishop*

St. Norbert, born in 11th century Germany, founded the Norbertine Order. During the early part of his life in the Church, Norbert's faith was not very strong. He preferred to live a wealthy lifestyle and often paid others to do his work. After he was thrown from his horse and nearly died, St. Norbert's faith changed. He devoted himself to a life of penance, became a priest and gave much of his property away. Traveling in France, he was influenced by the work of St. Bernard of Clairvaux and the Cistercian reforms of monastic life. Norbert founded a monastery at Premontre in 1120. The Norbertine Canons grew as an order and St. Norbert was widely mourned at his death in 1134. The Norbertines continue to thrive today.

June 7: *St. Robert of Newminster*

St. Robert helped to bring about Cistercian reforms to England in the 12th century. At first a parish priest, Robert later joined a monastery and became a Benedictine monk. Known for his gentleness and devotion to prayer, Robert was asked to form a new monastery. He established the Abbey of Newminster and served as abbot for twenty years. During this time, he became friends with the hermit St. Godric. St. Robert died in 1159.

June 8: *St. Jacques Berthieu, Martyr*

St. Jacques Berthieu was a French Jesuit missionary who died for his faith in Madagascar. He was born in France in 1838 and served as a parish priest for ten years. Feeling a call to missionary life, he joined the Society of Jesus in 1873. He was sent to Malagasy and later Madagascar, a mostly Muslim country. There were many uprisings against Christians at

that time, but St. Jacques never strayed from his desire to bring people to Jesus. In 1896, he was kidnapped by a local anti-Christian group. They demanded that he renounce his faith, but St. Jacques refused. He was martyred on June 8, 1896.

June 9: *St. Ephrem, Deacon and Doctor*

St. Ephrem lived in Syria in the 4th century. He was ordained a deacon as a young man and immediately began composing hymns and writing about the Bible. St. Ephrem used his hymns as a way to catechize and to warn Christians against heresies. In this way, he became known as one of the greatest early Christian poets writing in the Syriac dialect. St. Ephrem died from the plague while ministering to the sick. Because of his beautiful hymns and other writings, St. Ephrem was named a Doctor of the Church.

June 10: *Blessed Edward Joannes Maria Poppe*

Blessed Edward was born in 1890 in Belgium to a very pious Catholic family. While still a seminarian, he was drafted into the army. He served as a battlefield nurse during World War I. At this time in his life, he experienced great suffering but also the great graces of prayer. After the war, Edward became a priest and served a poor parish in Ghent. His passion and devotion to all aspects of his priestly ministry led to a spiritual rebirth in the area. Throughout all of this, he suffered from heart problems. He died in 1924 and was beatified by St. John Paul II in 1999.

June 11: *St. Barnabas the Apostle*

St. Barnabas was an early Christian. He is first mentioned in the *Acts of the Apostles* after he sells his property and gives it to the Church (4:36-37). It was Barnabas who first brought St. Paul to the Apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 9:27). They traveled together converting and preaching. It is believed that Barnabas was martyred by Jews in Syria.

June 12: *One Hundred and Eight Polish Martyrs of World War II*

The one hundred and eight Polish Martyrs are a group of bishops, priests, nuns, monks, seminarians and lay people killed by the Nazis for their faith during World War II.

Throughout the war, the Nazis targeted Catholics as enemies of the state. Many died in concentration camps, such as Auschwitz and Dachau. Some were killed because they were spiritual leaders in their communities. Others were killed because they worked to protect Jews from the Nazis. Although many Polish Catholics were killed during World War II, these one hundred and eight martyrs are specifically recognized for their virtuous lives and heroic deaths. They were beatified as a group by St. John Paul II in 1999.

June 13: *St. Anthony of Padua, Priest and Doctor*

St. Anthony of Padua was born and raised in Lisbon, Portugal in 1195. He first joined the Abbey of St. Vincent. There, he encountered some Franciscan friars who were staying at the abbey before traveling to Morocco. When St. Anthony heard that these men had been martyred a year later, he left his order and became a Franciscan friar. He traveled to Italy and eventually was asked to preach throughout the northern part of the country. He met St. Francis of Assisi who was impressed with Anthony's education. He asked him to oversee the education of the friars. He continued to preach all over Italy until he fell ill in 1231. He died at the age of thirty-five.

June 14: *St. Joseph the Hymnographer*

St. Joseph is known for writing over one thousand liturgical hymns and poems in Greek. He was born in 9th century Sicily, but fled to Greece and became a monk. He traveled to Rome in 841. Along the way, he was captured by pirates and imprisoned for six years. He was miraculously freed by St. Nicholas and returned to Constantinople. There, St. Joseph founded a monastery. He spent the rest of his life writing the poetry and hymns for which he is known. Many of his hymns continue to be sung today. St. Joseph died in 886.

June 15: *St. Germaine Cousin*

St. Germaine's entire life was dominated by suffering, but also a sweetness of spirit and a desire to serve God in all that she did. She was born in France in 1579. She was a sick baby and had a deformed hand. Her mother died while Germaine was still very young. Her father remarried, but his new wife refused to accept Germaine as her daughter. Germaine was forced to work as a shepherdess and lived in the barn with the farm animals. Despite her harsh life, Germaine fasted, did penance, and was devoted to the Rosary and going to Mass. In 1601, her father began to regret allowing his daughter to live in such poverty and

cruelty. He decided to let Germaine live in the family house. Sadly, when he went to invite her, he discovered that she had died in her sleep the night before. Many years later, St. Germaine's body was found to be incorrupt and devotion to her spread widely. She was canonized in 1867.

June 16: *St. John Francis Regis*

St. John Francis Regis, more commonly known simply as St. Regis. He was a Jesuit priest living and working in France during the early 17th century. After his studies and priestly training, he began a life working with the poor and those on the outside of regular society, such as at-risk women and orphans. He established houses in which at-risk women could train as lace makers. He also worked with victims of serious illness, and preached against Protestantism. Known for his simple, direct preaching style, he traveled throughout France and converted many. He fell ill and died of pneumonia in 1640 when he was forty-three years old.

June 17: *St. Emily de Vialar*

St. Emily de Vialar founded the Congregation of Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition in 1832. Born to an aristocratic French family, Emily had to leave school at the age of fifteen to care for her widowed father. Although he insisted that Emily marry, she made a private vow of celibacy. She spent her free time caring for neglected children. In 1832, Emily's grandfather died and left her a large fortune. She bought a large home and founded an order of nuns devoted to educating children and caring for the poor. At the time of her death in 1856, there were forty houses in the Congregation.

June 18: *St. Gregory Barbarigo*

St. Gregory Barbarigo used his intellect and wisdom in service of the Church. He was born to an important and ancient family in Venice in 1625. He traveled as a diplomat while still a young man. When he returned to Italy, he began a secular political career. His dissatisfaction led him to serve the Church. Ordained in 1655, he first served Pope Alexander VII and eventually was made Cardinal and Bishop of Padua. Throughout this time, he worked to implement the reforms of the Council of Trent. He considered St. Charles Borromeo to be his spiritual model. He died in 1697.

June 19: *St. Romuald, Abbot*

St. Romuald lived in Ravenna, Italy during the 10th century. When he witnessed his father kill a man in a duel, he chose to end his life of wealth and pleasure. After spending a few years as a monk in Ravenna, he became a hermit because he wanted a stricter way of life. Eventually, others came to join him. St. Romuald founded a new monastery in Camaldoli, and today these monks are known as Camaldolese monks. St. Romuald died in 1027.

June 20: *St. Adalbert, Bishop*

St. Adalbert of Magdeburg is often called the Apostle of the Slavs. He was very instrumental in evangelizing the Slavic people in the 10th century. He began his religious life as a Benedictine monk in Germany. In 961 he was sent to Kiev by Emperor Otto the Great. Although this first mission was unsuccessful, St. Adalbert did not give up. He was made Archbishop of Magedburg and founded Roman Catholic dioceses throughout eastern Germany and Poland. Through this, he was able to bring about the conversion of many Slavic pagan tribes. St. Adalbert died in 981.
