

Restore the Roots

Cultivating Your Domestic Church

A Liturgical Living Initiative of St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral, La Crosse, WI

Vol. 2 No. 4

September Feasts and Fasts

3 St. Gregory the Great



St. Gregory was born to wealthy Roman citizens in the year 540. When his father died, he sold all his possessions, founded six monasteries and became a monk. Although he was requested to be an abbot, the pope died in 590 and Gregory was elected in his place. He cared for poor and needy people and was a staunch advocate of peace. The reforms that St. Gregory made strengthened the church by removing unworthy priests and also refining the liturgy. While today it is disputed, Gregorian chant bears its name from St. Gregory who gathered and codified the chant that was being sung. Today, listen to Gregorian chant and pray for peace. Read the article on page 3.

13 St. John Chrysostom



St. John Chrysostom was born in the mid 4th century in what is present day Turkey. From a young age, he stole away to the hillside and practiced an intensely ascetic and monastic life. Due to stomach issues, he returned to society to serve as a priest. Some years later, he was appointed the Bishop of Constantinople, an important imperial city. St. John preached fervently from his authority and was not shy about publicly shaming the nobility and adhering to his strong biblical values. He was a target for criticism and he faced many false accusations in an attempt to discredit him. The Empress Eudoxia was not a fan of his fiery preaching and eventually exiled him. He died in 407. Today, he is one of the 37 Doctors of the Church. Enjoy something with honey today, like the cake found on page 3.

18, 20 & 21 Ember Days



Ember days originally grew out of the turning of the seasons of the year, petitioning God for His favor in the harvest of that season. Fall ember days were offered for the grape harvest and in thanksgiving for the Precious Blood. In the past, the faithful were required to fast (2 small "meals" and one main meal) and abstain from meat on Friday (like on Fridays in Lent) but allowing meat at the main meal on Wednesday and Saturday. Confession was encouraged on these days. While this is not obligatory today, many find spiritual depth in adding the Ember days to their calendar! (See page 4 for a full explanation.)

23 St. Pio of Pietrelcina



Padre Pio was born in Italy in 1887. He was very religious from a young age and entered a Capuchin friary at the age of 15. He had many extraordinary spiritual gifts and charisms including the ability to see guardian angels and talk to Jesus and Mary, levitating during prayer, bilocation, developing the stigmata which emitted the scent of perfume, the gift of tongues, prophecy, healing and the ability to read hearts. He became quite famous due to these miracles and would spend 10 hours a day hearing confessions and praying for healing for people who had traveled from afar to see him. Padre Pio impacted so many lives that around 100,000 people attended his funeral! Today, go to confession, pray to your guardian angel, or have a cappuccino and a donut in honor of one of his sayings, "Pray, hope, and don't (donut) worry."

Traditional Monthly Devotion: Seven Sorrows of Mary



Friday, Day of Sacrifice, Exaltation of the Cross



In the Church, Friday is devoted to Christ's Passion and his Sacred Heart. It is a day to meditate upon the Cross, upon which hung the Salvation of the world. On Fridays, the Church asks us to abstain from meat or take on one additional mortification. We also encourage you to spend time in front of a Crucifix, pray the Stations of the Cross, and perhaps read this brief reflection about the importance and coherence of Friday in our Tradition.

On the sixth day of Creation, Friday, God created Adam and Eve. They found themselves in a garden called Eden, the Greek word for paradise. On Friday, we find ourselves in another garden, not paradise, but kepos, the garden of the Tomb, right next to Golgotha, where Jesus died and where tradition holds is the very place where Adam, too, was buried.

On Friday we find ourselves caught between two shadows: the shadow of death and the shadow of the glory of the Resurrection. We are caught between two gardens gaping at two trees: the tree upon which God hangs dying, and the Tree of Life from Eden. The two trees now become one and the same.

On a Friday, Adam sinned, and also on a Friday, God died for us, to remit our sins. On a Friday, Adam was thrown out of Paradise, and on a Friday, Paradise was opened to him, unlocked by the blood of Christ which flowed down the Cross from his side into Adam's very skull, where he lay buried.

On Friday, we are a little more somber, recalling the day when all of creation trembled as its Creator emptied Himself to restore all creation to Himself. For Christ had no need to die. He did not need to die for his sake, for he is without blemish; nor did he need to die for our sake. He could have left us in our miserable condition, or he could have saved us in a different, less painful way. But as the high priest Caiaphas said, "it is better that one man should die instead of the people, so that the whole nation may not perish." Why is it better? It is better so that, seeing our redemption to be complete, we may increase in

faith, hope, and charity. For who is not moved to say with the centurion, "Truly this was the son of God," when he "looks on the crucifix and sees how Our Lord hangs there, the head bent as though to kiss, the arms outstretched in an embrace, the hands pierced to give, the side opened to love, the feet nailed to remain with us? The chalice thou didst drink, O good Jesus, maketh thee lovable above all things." (St. Bernard of Clairvaux)

So we move from garden to garden, our eyes fixed on a Tree and on a woman standing nearby. As Adam looked to a lady in usurping the fruit, so do we look to a Lady to receive the fruit of the Tree of the Cross. We turn entirely to Mary, and we do what she did on this wonderful, bitter day. We kiss the feet of the crucified God. We wait humbly, expectantly for that third garden, our true Paradise, where we will sing the victory song of the Cross for all eternity: Ave crux spes unica! Hail O Cross, our only Hope!



This month, let us focus on Fridays as a day of sacrifice. What can you give to Jesus as a sacrifice of love? While we are no longer bound to fast from meat, we are still urged to give up something. Many find that giving up meat is a suitable penance that they prefer to continue since it was done for centuries. If you prefer not to do that, here are some other options:

- Drink only water
- Give up sweets and dessert
- Eat only bread and water for lunch
- Don't eat out, make your meals instead
- Fast from phone use, social media or TV
- Don't use condiments and/or sweeteners
- Sacrifice time and go to Mass

And when you hit a point in your day where what you've given up is uncomfortable, don't grumble, give that ache to Jesus!



SEPT.
3

Gregorian Chant

Did St. Gregory “invent” Gregorian chant? Or, did it actually come about later? There are many theories as to where Gregorian Chant came from, but this chant bears his name, so today we look at this lovely piece of Catholic history.

Pope St. Pius X called Gregorian chant “the chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant she has inherited from ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical codices, which she directly proposes to the faithful as her own...” Many of us are not familiar with chant because it is not often found in the liturgy now. However, it was never removed during the Second Vatican Council. In fact, the documents of the council state, “The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman Liturgy: therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.”

If you are not familiar with Gregorian chant, now is the time to find this gem. St. Augustine said, “when one sings, you pray twice.” Something that has this kind of beauty lifts your soul to the divine realities more easily than words alone. In fact, some things are actually meant to be sung, not said! Precisely why we sing or chant the responsorial Psalm at Mass on Sunday! Psalms were always intoned in the Jewish faith and the early Christians did the same because that is what they knew. How beautifully fitting that Gregorian Chant came to be used in the liturgy, especially for the Psalms!

SING THE HOURS



The Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office, is the daily prayer of the Church, marking the



hours of each day and sanctifying the day with prayer. Priests and religious say the Divine Office 5 times a day. Many lay people also say different “hours” of the day. Traditionally, the Liturgy of the Hours was sung or chanted and *Sing the Hours* podcast is seeking to restore chanting to the prayer. *Sing the Hours* chants morning and evening prayer each day for you to just listen to or to chant along with. Scan the QR code to listen on their website or find it on your podcast app!

SEPT.
13

Honey Cake for St. John

While in Antioch, St. John Chrysostom’s homilies were extremely eloquent and filled with knowledge. Many were astonished by his peaching. In this period he was nicknamed “Golden Mouth” because his words seemed to be pure gold. In this customary Turkish cake, we find honey as a key ingredient, not only golden in color but sweet as the words of the Gospel!



3/4 cup butter

2/3 cup honey

3 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon baking powder

Pinch of salt

1 cup Greek yogurt 

- Preheat oven to 350. Butter and flour a 9.5 inch spring form* pan.
- Beat the honey and butter together until pale. Add the eggs in one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla and beat well. Add the flour, baking powder and a pinch of salt together with the yogurt, and beat until thick** and smooth. Spoon in to pan.
- Bake for about 45 minutes or until a skewer inserted comes out clean. Be careful not to overbake. If after 30 minutes the top is starting to brown, cover the cake with foil.
- Remove the pan from the oven and cool in the pan for 10-15 minutes before turning out on to a wire rack.

*If you do not have a spring form pan, you can use a round cake pan. Be sure to butter and flour well, and line the bottom with parchment as well. This cake is so moist that it will not come out if you don’t! Run a knife around the edge before flipping out.

**If it is not thick (like cake batter), you can add up to 1/2 cup more of flour, 2 tablespoons at a time.

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SEPT.
18,20,21

Ember Days



Ours is a faith of fasting and feasting, observed in both seasons and individual days throughout the liturgical year: the quiet expectation of Advent and the joy of the Christmas season; the penance of Lent and the exuberance of the Easter season. This rhythm is not unlike our experience with life; the ebb and flow of seasons of difficulty and in seasons of bounty. In Her wisdom, the Church similarly has four sets of days, called Ember days, spread throughout the year to help us periodically turn toward Our Lord and ground us in our reliance on Him.

Ember days originally grew out of the turning of the seasons of the year, petitioning God for His favor in the harvest of that season.



The spring days were offered for the flower harvest and recalls baptism.



The summer days were offered for the wheat harvest and in thanksgiving for the Eucharist.



The fall harvest was offered for the grape harvest and in thanksgiving for the Precious Blood.



The winter days were offered for the olive harvest to be used for the anointing of the sick.



Much like the seasonal growth, we see the course of our life as well. Although we, as a society, have moved away from our close ties with the agricultural seasons, the Church has kept these days as days of fasting and penance that are also tied to major touchstones of the liturgical year. The Ember Days are observed in each of the weeks after the first Sunday of Lent, Pentecost, the Feast of the Holy Cross (Sept. 14), and the Feast of St. Lucy (Dec. 13). A common rhyme for remembering these days is "Lenty, Penty, Cruicy, Lucy". During each of these weeks, the Ember days are Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Wednesday to mark the day Judas betrayed Jesus, Friday for the day Jesus died and Saturday for the day Jesus was in the tomb. Again, these days are now optional but you may find them to be a valuable practice as part of your faith life.

SEPT.
23

Padre Pio and the Capuchins



St. Padre Pio belonged to the order of the Capuchin Franciscans, which can be traced back to St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis formed the order of Franciscans in 1209. As time went on, the tenets of the order were not adhered to strictly and in 1528 a reform movement took place within the order and the Capuchins were formed. The Capuchins wanted to return to the original focuses of the Franciscan order: prayer and poverty. They did this through contemplative prayer (being attentive and gazing at God, often with the help of scripture, e.g.: "Be still and know that I am God.") and through extreme plainness or simplicity. They believe that they have returned back to the solitude and penance that St. Francis originally created the order to live.

In Italian, "cappuccio" means "pointed hood," thus giving the name Capuchins since they are seen wearing big hoods as a part of their habit.

Meaning of the Franciscan Habit

Tunic with Hood - when the simple brown tunic is laid out upon the floor, it takes the shape of a cross. Every time this garment is put on, it is a reminder to "take up your cross daily."



Woolen Cord - tying the tunic closer to the body with the cord represents preparing for the day to day spiritual battle such as chastity. Some also

believe the cord to be connected with scripture in John 21* to represent being obedient to wherever the Lord is calling them.

Three Knots - represent their three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.



While we don't have a habit that we wear daily, what can you put on every day that will remind you of daily taking up your cross, your love of Jesus and your end goal of heaven? A crucifix, a rosary in your pocket, a scapular, a bracelet with scripture passage, etc. Be intentional with it!

*"Amen, Amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." He [Jesus] said this signifying what kind of death he would glorify God. And when he said this, he said to him [Peter], "Follow me." - John 21: 18-19