

October Celebrations

October 1 St. Therese of the Child Jesus



St. Therese is a wonderful saint to get to know. She never founded a religious order. She never performed great works; and never went on missions, but she understood that what matters in the Christian life is not great deeds, but great love, and that anyone can achieve the heights of holiness by doing even the smallest things well for love of God. This was her “Little Way.” Pope John Paul II named St. Therese a Doctor of the Church on October 19, 1997 and Patroness of Missions.

She is one of my favorites and is known for showering her prayers on us by the sign of roses. I found the recent Therese movie good, but a little syrupy. (My teenage boys didn't like it.) Here is a nice 9 minute (part 1) YouTube (search Saint Therese of Lisieux - The Little Flower 1/2) which tells about her life and shows many of her pictures and relics. I've also included a brief and easy to read aloud biography below.

One of the reasons Therese is one of my favorites is because I've experienced a few “mini miracles” from her and her parents' intercessions. I've actually been blessed with a visit to Lisieux.

If anyone lives in or near Illinois, please check out the National Shrine of St. Therese. It has many feast day activities and boasts one of the largest collections of relics outside Lisieux. <http://www.saint-therese.org/>



Something to do:

Decorate with roses or flowers today. I always have dying, leggy roses in my garden this time of year and I bring in the petals to decorate the table.

If you are good with frosting, decorate a cake or cupcake with roses.

Have you seen sacrifice beads? St. Therese kept a set of 10 beads in her pocket. Every time she would make a small sacrifice she would slide a bead. If you have some Pony beads you can make your own. It serves as a great reminder throughout the day. Here is site which gives you directions to make your own. <http://thelittleways.com/how-to-make-sacrifice-beads>

Most important on this day is to try to remember her “Little Way” and do small things with great love.

Something to Pray:

Prayer to Saint Therese

O Little Flower of Jesus, you have shown yourself so powerful in your intercession, so tender and compassionate toward those who honor you and invoke you in suffering and distress, that I kneel at your feet with perfect confidence and beseech you most humbly and earnestly to take me under your protection in my present necessity and to obtain for me this favor I ask (*mention your request*). Recommend my request to Mary, the merciful Queen of Heaven, that she may plead my cause with you before the throne of Jesus, her divine Son. Cease not to intercede for me until my request is granted.

St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, pray for us. Amen.

~~ from "Prayers for Today," published by Leaflet Missal Co.

Brief Biography of St. Therese:

Therese Martin, the youngest of nine children, was born in Alencon France in 1873. Her father, Louis, was a successful watchmaker and jeweler. Her mother Zelig Guerin, built a cottage industry in lace making, beginning in the village of Alencon, which is known for its delicate lace.

Four of Therese's siblings died at a young age; the remaining five girls eventually all entered the convent, so deep was their call to sanctity. Four became contemplative Carmelite Nuns at the Lisieux Carmel, and one became a Visitation sister.

Therese wasn't always a nun nor was she always a saint. She was a very regular little girl, who was rather sensitive. In fact, she seemed like a spoiled little girl, who would stomp her feet and have a temper tantrum if she did not get her own way.

After the death of her mother, while Therese was only 4, her father, who referred to her as “my little queen” would give her anything she wanted to keep her happy. Louis Martin was protective of his daughters. He wouldn't allow them to read the newspapers, fearful that it would make them too worldly. But the mischievous girls would steal away with the newspaper while papa napped and carefully return it before he awoke.

At a young age, this precocious child wanted everything. She would get more than she bargained for. Sick physically and emotionally, she was healed by Our Lady of the Smile at the age of 11. She experienced a profound conversion on Christmas eve, 1886, at the age of 13.

She felt a call to enter Carmel as a contemplative Nun, so that she could give herself totally to Jesus. But she was too young. Appeals to the Mother Superior and Priest Chaplain yielded: “when you are old enough -16”. Not content, Therese and her father appealed to the Bishop. Not getting the response she wanted, she appealed directly and personally to the Pope while on a parish pilgrimage to Rome. Therese had always said: “I want everything”- and she usually got it.

Persistence paid off. Therese was allowed to enter the Lisieux Carmel at the age of 15 – her father lived to see her professed a Carmelite Nun. She took the religious name of Sister Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face. God’s spirit worked powerfully in Therese, so open was she to Divine Love. Still dreaming of taking on the world as a priest and missionary, she wrestled with her vocation and place in the Church. Finally she came to realize that her “vocation is love” – the love of God was the energy source for the Church – and fulfillment of the human heart and longing.

Despite her desire for the dramatic and expansive, Therese developed a simple spirituality, based on childlike trust and confidence in God. The spirituality of her “little way” was not about extraordinary things – but rather about doing simple things of life well and with extraordinary love. She believed and taught that “everything is grace” – God’s face and presence could be experienced in every person and situation of our lives, if we just attend with love and expectancy

Her love became surrender, as she slowly died of tuberculosis. Her superior asked her to write down her reflections, which became her autobiography, “Story of a Soul.” She died at the age of 24, believing that her life was really just beginning for God, promising to spend her heaven doing good on earth. Her promised “shower of roses” began and have become a torrent in the Church ever since.

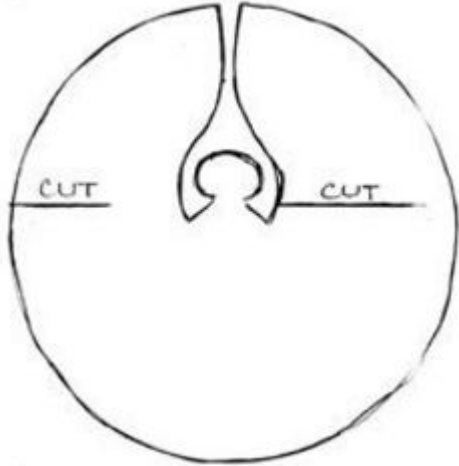


October 2 Feast of the Guardian Angels

Although not celebrated this year because it falls on a Sunday, I thought that it would still be worth mentioning. We all need reminders of our Guardian Angels and their roles in our lives. To celebrate this day in the past, I’ve made biscuits using an angel cookie cutter. We’ll have these biscuits for breakfast with our Southern sausage gravy if it’s a weekend or for a week day dinner with chicken and biscuits.

Something to Do:

Decorate with lots of angels. There are some easy ones that can be made out of paper plates or coffee filters. I try to put lots of these on the table to remind everyone that we are surrounded by our angels. <http://www.marthastewart.com/272551/paper-plate-angels> (Mine never looked quite as fancy as Martha Stewart's, but they are so easy to make on the spot—even when you are setting the table.) Try also: <http://crafts.kaboose.com/easy-coffee-filter-angel.html>



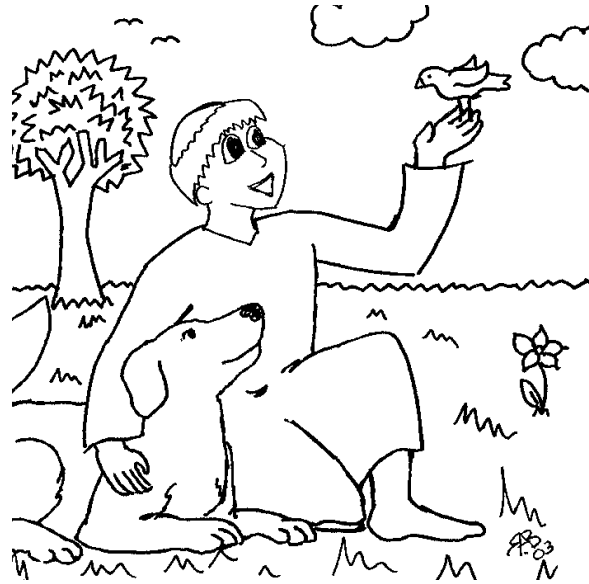
Something to Eat:

Since it is Sunday, what better reason to have a delightful dessert with an Angel theme. Let's use that angel cookie cutter for cookies! It would be a fun day to make everyone in your family a Guardian Angel Cookie—even extra angels for extended family and friends. Or how about a fancy, but very easy trifle with a store bought angel food cake? <http://allrecipes.com/recipe/strawberry-trifle/detail.aspx>

Something to Pray:

If you don't already, remember to say the Guardian Angel Prayer before bed:
"Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom His love entrusts me here, ever this day [night] be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen."

October 4 St. Francis of Assisi



Something to Do:

Copyright ColoringSaints.org Please go to their website to download your own full size copy to print and color.

Get Your Animals Blessed

There is something exciting about going to the church with your pet(s) for a blessing from your priest. If you have the opportunity and your pet is well behaved (or in a cage) then by all means, go! But if you have some animals that are better left at home, or no animal blessings nearby then you can do your own. Use some Holy Water if you have some.

From AmericanCatholic.org:

‘Do-it-yourself’ Franciscan Animal Blessing

For all animals:

*Blessed are you, Lord God,
maker of all living creatures.
On the fifth and sixth days of creation,
you called forth fish in the sea,
birds in the air and animals on the land.
You inspired St. Francis to call all animals
his brothers and sisters.
We ask you to bless this animal.
By the power of your love,
enable it to live according to your plan.
May we always praise you
for all your beauty in creation.
Blessed are you, Lord our God, in all your creatures! Amen.*

Here is a story to tell during dessert at the dinner table. I don't know if you need to go vegetarian today, but it's just a thought . . . ☺

St. Francis and the Wolf (Also from AmericanCatholic.org)

Perhaps the most famous story of St. Francis is when he tamed the wolf that was terrorizing the people of Gubbio. While Francis was staying in that town he learned of a wolf so ravenous that it was not only killing and eating animals, but people, too. The people took up arms and went after it, but those who encountered the wolf perished at its sharp teeth. Villagers became afraid to leave the city walls.

Francis had pity on the people and decided to go out and meet the wolf. He was desperately warned by the people, but he insisted that God would take care of him. A brave friar and several peasants accompanied Francis outside the city gate. But soon the peasants lost heart and said they would go no farther.

Francis and his companion began to walk on. Suddenly the wolf, jaws agape, charged out of the woods at the couple. Francis made the Sign of the Cross toward it. The power of God caused the wolf to slow down and to close its mouth.

Then Francis called out to the creature: "Come to me, Brother Wolf. In the name of Christ, I order you not to hurt anyone." At that moment the wolf lowered its head and lay down at St. Francis' feet, meek as a lamb.

St. Francis explained to the wolf that he had been terrorizing the people, killing not only animals, but humans who are made in the image of God. "Brother Wolf," said Francis, "I want to make peace between you and the people of Gubbio. They will harm you no more and you must no longer harm them. All past crimes are to be forgiven."

The wolf showed its assent by moving its body and nodding its head. Then to the absolute surprise of the gathering crowd, Francis asked the wolf to make a pledge. As St. Francis extended his hand to receive the pledge, so the wolf extended its front paw and placed it into the saint's hand. Then Francis commanded the wolf to follow him into town to make a peace pact with the townspeople. The wolf meekly followed St. Francis.

By the time they got to the town square, everyone was there to witness the miracle. With the wolf at his side, Francis gave the town a sermon on the wondrous and fearful love of God, calling them to repent from all their sins. Then he offered the townspeople peace, on behalf of the wolf. The townspeople promised in a loud voice to feed the wolf. Then Francis asked the wolf if he would live in peace under those terms. He bowed his head and twisted his body in a way that convinced everyone he accepted the pact. Then once again the wolf placed its paw in Francis' hand as a sign of the pact.

From that day on the people kept the pact they had made. The wolf lived for two years among the townspeople, going from door to door for food. It hurt no one and no one hurt it. Even the dogs did not bark at it. When the wolf finally died of old age, the people of Gubbio were sad. The wolf's peaceful ways had been a living reminder to them of the wonders, patience, virtues and holiness of St. Francis. It had been a living symbol of the power and providence of the living God.

By John Feister, from AmericanCatholic.org.

Something to Pray:

End your dinnertime or evening prayer with St. Francis' famous prayer:

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy;*

*O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to
console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

October 7 Our Lady of the Rosary

Actually the whole month is dedicated to the rosary. This is the one of the best ways to honor Mary. It seems that every time she appears, she asks that we say the rosary. It is a very powerful prayer.

Our family ups our rosary recitation this month and in particular for the cause of life. We say a rosary weekly at our local abortion clinic as part of the 40 Days Campaign.

Something to Do and Pray:

Try to say the rosary more as a family and individually. This should be our simple goal for the month, and each family will carry it out differently. Think about and pray about what ways your family can do this. Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

- 1) More car rosaries. Even just a decade when you get in.
- 2) Sunday night rosary. If you do Sunday, then add Wednesday or Friday for this month.
- 3) Go to an Adoration Chapel (or just the church) once a week to say the rosary.
- 4) Use a video or CD recording to say the rosary. Kids especially like to watch what's going on in the mystery—plus, it really is a nice reminder to us of what we

are supposed to be meditating on. On YouTube there are many set to music with pictures or clips from movies. I liked the ones by Mysaviormygod like <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QS0xsCH4CtA>

- 5) Purchase a rosary coloring book from your Catholic bookstore and let the children color while reciting.
- 6) Use a children's rosary book to look at the pictures while saying the rosary.
- 7) Make a life-size rosary and walk through it while saying the rosary. We've done this with chalk.
- 8) We like to say the rosary outside around a fire in the evening. It makes for a peaceful meditative prayer.

Something to Eat:

Purchase some M&M's and place on a cake in the shape of a rosary and you've got an instant rosary cake. This is a great dessert to eat on this feast day of Our Lady of the Rosary.

October 17, 18, 19 St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Luke, Sts. John DeBrebeuf and Isaac Jogues

Three good ones right in a row (and we missed St. Teresa of Jesus on the 15th). You pick. It probably is too much to do all three.

St. Ignatius of Antioch was an early church martyr torn apart by wild beasts. He's often shown with lions devouring him.



Something to do for St. Ignatius:

I thought this short, but powerful reading about St. Ignatius' last day would be nice to share with your family at dinner:

A Recreation of the Last Day of ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH from the St. Ignatius Parish website in Pinellas County, Fl

The Flavian Amphitheater, the Roman Coliseum, the ancient equivalent of the Superdome, was the ancient place for the most popular of all sporting events. It was called the Coliseum because it was built next to a Colossus, a giant statue of the Emperor Nero. It took only 11 years to build it. It featured all three types of columns, Doric, Ionic and Corinthian. It had ventilation all around it. It had the finest travertine marble on its facing. The floor could be flooded for naval demonstrations. The top could be covered with a huge awning to protect the spectators from the sun. On a big day, 50,000 spectators could be seated.

Outside the amphitheater and throughout Rome the ticket sellers would be hawking, "Come to the fights. Come see the gladiators duel to the death." For a few denarii the Roman could see great warriors fight their last battle. "Come to the fight." Perhaps, though, even this got boring to the blood thirsty Romans. The Emperor Trajan put some new enthusiasm into the shows. He condemned Christians to do battle with the wild animals. "Come to the show. Come and see if the Christian God, Jesus Christ, will appear and do battle for his radical followers."

On one particular occasion the show promised to be particularly special. "Today," the ticket sellers announce, "there will be a special show. Ignatius of Antioch, the most powerful follower of Christ of the East, perhaps the most powerful in the entire empire has finally arrived in Rome. It took two years to get him here. Thousands of his companions greeted him at every port trying to convince him to stay with them. He refused to let them bribe the guards. He must think he's powerful enough himself to take on the lions. Come and see this show. Maybe Christ himself will appear."

Fifty thousand people gathered. The crowd was warmed up with a number of duels. After a while they called for this Ignatius, "Come out and do battle." The trumpets blared; the crowd hushed, and out came these Christian warriors. They were dressed in white robes. They wore roses in the hair. An old man with a long beard walked with them. He was identified as Ignatius. This frail man, who had written so much about Jesus, who had led the heretical Christian sect in Antioch, Ignatius, was going to do battle with lions. What a joke.

And it was a joke. And it wasn't much of a show. Ignatius repeated to himself what he had written to his followers. "I am the wheat of God. I must be ground by the teeth of the lions into flour. I must become the pure bread of Christ." Ignatius knelt down and was quickly killed. Christ never did appear to do battle with the beasts. Or did he? After the other Christians died, after the beasts had their fill and were returned to their pens, after the crowds filed out of the stadium, Christians came and picked up the martyrs' roses, strewn throughout the floor of the arena. They recited a psalm for each rose they picked up, the beginning of the prayer later generations would call the Rosary. Perhaps, some of the departing Romans looked back and saw this scene. Perhaps then, they recognized in Ignatius of Antioch, in the Christians who came to gather up the bodies and pray the prayers of roses, perhaps these Romans glancing at this compassionate scene could understand the Power of the Gospel.

Something to pray for St. Luke:

One of my children's middle name is Luke, and I always use this feast day to remind him of his namesake. Otherwise, he would continue to think he was named after Luke Skywalker. Like I do for anyone's saint's day, I let my Gabriel Luke choose the dessert.

Luke was a physician, the only Gentile writer in the New Testament—he wrote both his Gospel and The Acts of the Apostles, and close companion of St. Paul.

Here is the collect from Mass today that you could say at dinner:

The Collect

Almighty God, who inspired your servant Luke the physician to set forth in the Gospel the love and healing power of your Son: Graciously continue in your Church this love and power to heal, to the praise and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Something to do for St. John De Brebeuf and St. Isaac Jogues:

I just have to include this last story. It is best told after dinner since it contains some gruesome details. It is told from Mary Reed Newland's book, *The Saints and Our Children*.

Here is a story to remember when one is tempted to sin with his hands. Directions: Isaac Jogues was one of the French Jesuits who came from France in the seventeenth century to bring the gift of Baptism and the Faith to the Indians in the New World. It would be hard to find in all the lives of the saints a story more filled with danger, terror and blazing love than that of these Jesuits. Men of refinement from gracious homes and loving families, who entered religion and lived surrounded by the love and the regard of their brother priests, they left all for a life of utter deprivation that was harder than their wildest imaginings. The people they had come to serve were truly savage. Suspicious, crafty, cruel, unclean, coarse, impure, accustomed to the most primitive ways, these children of the One God worshipped many gods and offered them many things in sacrifice, including the flesh of their enemies which these Indians often ate. To such people the Jesuits adapted themselves, gave themselves. Nothing in the lives of the early martyrs of the Church surpasses these modern martyrs. Their story is a *must* for every boy and girl, mother and father. It is a tale of how men are supposed to love — as their Master loves — to the last drop of blood and the last shred of flesh.

The plague of the French settlements on the St. Lawrence and of the Jesuits working among the Hurons was the Iroquois, the five nations of Indians below the St. Lawrence occupying what is now part of New York State. Among these tribes the Mohawks were the most fierce and their avowed determination to wipe the Hurons from the face of the earth kept them constantly on the warpath, harassing both their enemy and their enemy's French friends.

On the morning of August 2, 1642, a party including Father Isaac Jogues, René Goupil, William Couture, several Christian Hurons and others, forty in all, were ambushed and captured. The Mohawks did them unspeakable violence. It is hard to imagine that ever in the history of mankind have there been blood baths worse than these. The torture march took them mile after mile, sometimes on foot, sometimes cramped in canoes, bleeding, infected, feverish, set upon wildly at the nightly encampments and dragged about by the hair, the beard, pinched, plucked, probed, pierced for the delight it afforded their captors. Entering encampments and villages, they were forced to run the gauntlet, climb the torture platforms, endure the same outrages repeated for the amusement it afforded the villagers. At night they were tied to the ground, their hands and feet staked, and left for whatever torments the women and children devised. It amused the Indians to sprinkle hot coals on the prisoners' bodies and wait to see if the captives would betray their pain. Years of hardening in the forests, enduring the fierce Canadian winters, living with the minimum of shelter,

clothing and accommodation had seasoned and tried the fortitude of the Indians. Love of God accounted for the fortitude of the priests. They knew the worst lay ahead of them with their arrival at the village of their captors where they would again be tortured and at last, Perhaps, mercifully meet death.

The day came. Hideously "embraced" by the villagers who met them at the bank of the river, they were marched across a ford and herded into a field. The Mohawks solemnly offered thanksgiving to the sun and to the war demons who had delivered the French and the Hurons into their hands to be roasted and eaten. Next the prisoners were forced to run the gauntlet: William Couture the catechist was first, then the Christian Hurons, followed by René Goupil, more Hurons, and last of all the prize, the hated blackrobe *Ondessonk* — Isaac Jogues. The assaults were unbelievable. Jogues reached the end of the gauntlet to find his comrades "a bleeding pile of bodies. . . . Worst of all was Goupil. His face and head were smeared over with blood, so that there was left no white except that of his eyes. His features were smashed and swollen. . . . So pitiable was his condition, that he would have inspired compassion in cruelty itself. I found him all the more beautiful as he had more in common with Him who, bearing a face most worthy of the admiration and delight of angels, appeared to us, in the midst of His anguish, like unto a leper."

Next they were made to ascend the platform. Again they were beaten, cut, the skin of their fingers slit; then an old man, a sorcerer, ascended the platform dragging after him an Algonquin squaw named Joan who was known to be a Christian. He drove the others off and gnashed the fingers of *Ondessonk* in his teeth. "I hate this one most of all," he cried, and he ordered the Algonquin woman to cut off the left thumb. She shrank away, horrified. She loved the Blackrobes and their God, but the old man and the braves hedged her about, threatening to kill her if she delayed. Finally she took the knife and shaking with fright and terror horribly hacked off his thumb. He endured it silently. He saw his thumb lying at his feet where the woman had dropped it.

"Picking up the severed thumb with my right hand, I offered it to You, my living and my true God, for I remembered the Holy Sacrifices which I had offered to You upon the altars of your Church through seven years. I accepted this torture, O my God, as a loving vengeance for want of love and respect that I had shown in touching Your Holy Body . . ."

October 28 St. Simon and St. Jude



St. Simon is often pictured with a saw, which is the sign of his martyrdom of being sawed in half. Little is known about him except that he was called Simon the Zealot. This is probably because his mission work took him far away from Jerusalem.

St. Jude is traditionally depicted carrying the image of Jesus in his hand. This represents the imprint of the divine Countenance that was entrusted to him by Jesus. King Abagar of Edessa asked Jesus to cure him of leprosy and sent an artist to bring him a drawing of Jesus. Impressed with Abagar's great faith, Our Lord pressed his face on a cloth and gave it to St. Jude to take to Abagar and cure him. The King was cured and converted to Christianity along with most of his subjects.

St. Jude is known as the Saint of Impossible Causes. If you have an impossible cause, than invoke the help of this saint. Try his novena. StJudeNovena.org

Something to Pray:

Collect from the Mass: Father, you revealed yourself to us through the preaching of your apostles Simon and Jude. By their prayers, give your Church continued growth and increase the number of those who believe in you. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.