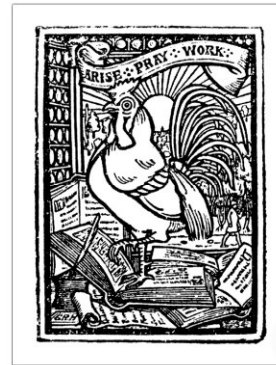


September Celebrations

September 3 Labor Day

"Bless, O Lord of the centuries and the millennia, the daily work by which men and women provide bread for themselves and their loved ones. We also offer to your fatherly hands the toil and sacrifices associated with work, in union with your Son Jesus Christ, who redeemed human work from the yoke of sin and restored it to its original dignity. - Pope John Paul II



“Ora et labora.” Pray and work. This is the simple yet powerful motto of the Benedictines. On this Labor Day, let’s remember the dignity of work, even if it consists of changing dirty diapers! During this time of economic uncertainty, we can give thanks if our family members have employment. And if jobs have been lost, let’s make sure we pray for those who need work.

I know this is a day for picnics and family fun. Why not take a quiet moment either at grace before the meal or before bed to pray for those who have lost their jobs:

Prayer for those in need of a job:

Gracious and loving God, you know our need for meaningful work. Send your Holy Spirit to guide those who are searching for employment. Help them to recognize the gifts and talents you have given them.

Deepen their desire to follow your will. Inspire them as they contact potential employers. Give them patience as they wait for responses. Shelter them from feelings of rejection. Protect them from discouragement. Give them courage to overcome fear.

Shower on them the graces they need to persevere. Let this time of searching become an opportunity to grow in faith, to cultivate the virtue of hope, and to experience your healing love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

September 5 Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta



Mother Teresa's Daily Prayer

Dear Jesus,
Help me to spread Thy fragrance everywhere I go.
Flood my soul with Thy spirit and love.
Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life
may only be a radiance of Thine.

Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Thy presence in my soul.

Let them look up and see no longer me but only Jesus.

Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as you shine, so to shine as to be a light to others.

~ Mother Teresa

September 8 Mary's Birthday



I like any occasion which brings the Blessed Mother more into our lives, and what better occasion than a birthday! We celebrate our earthly mother's birthday, so why not our mother in heaven. Make one of your favorite cakes today. (Or even that box mix that has been on the shelf for awhile.) We don't sing or blow out candles, although if I had all young ones I certainly would, but we enjoy our cake for dessert remembering how much we love our mother in heaven and how much she loves us. She loves to hear the rosary—this would make a great birthday gift.

September 15 Our Lady of Sorrows

It seems like it was such a joyful occasion last week for Mary's birthday, and now we have to be sad? I usually don't like to dwell on the sorrowful, but just as Mary was a real person who had a real birthday, she also was a real woman who underwent some serious suffering. To understand Christ's deep love and his suffering for us, it is helpful to look at it through the eyes of His mother. This is why the church holds this feast day and supports devotions to the sorrows or dolours of Mary. There are seven sorrows that the church recognizes. Can you and your family name them all? (See www.7dolors.com)

Below I have written out the Litany of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows written by Pope Pius VII. It may seem long, but it really is a beautiful prayer to say with your family. The leader simply says the left. Everyone else says the right. Because most of it is "pray for us," you don't need additional copies, and even the littlest ones can join in.

Lord, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
God, the Father of heaven,
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, .
God the Holy Ghost,

Christ have mercy on us.

Christ graciously hear us.
Have mercy on us
Have mercy on us.
Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mother of the Crucified,
Sorrowful Mother,
Mournful Mother,
Sighing Mother,
Afflicted Mother,
Forsaken Mother, .
Desolate Mother,
Mother most sad,
Mother set around with anguish,
Mother overwhelmed by grief,
Mother transfixed by a sword,
Mother crucified in thy heart,
Mother bereaved of thy Son,
Sighing Dove,
Mother of Dolors,
Fount of tears,
Sea of bitterness,
Field of tribulation,
Mass of suffering,
Mirror of patience,

Pray for us.
(Continue with pray for us
after each line.)

Rock of constancy,
Remedy in perplexity,
Joy of the afflicted,
Ark of the desolate,
Refuge of the abandoned,
Shield of the oppressed,
Conqueror of the incredulous,
Solace of the wretched,
Medicine of the sick,
Help of the faint,
Strength of the weak,
Protectress of those who fight,
Haven of the shipwrecked,
Calmer of tempests,
Companion of the sorrowful,
Retreat of those who groan,
Terror of the treacherous,
Standard-bearer of the Martyrs,
Treasure of the Faithful,
Light of Confessors,
Pearl of Virgins,
Comfort of Widows,
Joy of all Saints,
Queen of thy Servants,
Holy Mary, who alone art unexampled,



Pray for us, most Sorrowful Virgin,

That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray, --- O God, in whose Passion, according to the prophecy of Simeon, a sword of grief pierced through the most sweet soul of Thy glorious Blessed Virgin Mother Mary: grant that we, who celebrate the memory of her Seven Sorrows, may obtain the happy effect of Thy Passion, Who lives and reigns world without end, Amen.

September 20 Memorial of Saint Andrew Kim Taegŏn, priest and martyr and Saint Paul Chŏng Hasang, martyr, and their companions, martyrs

Here's a short bio from articlerich.com

At 15 years old, Saint Andrew Kim was baptized a Catholic and entered the seminary in Macau, a Portuguese colony. In 1845, St. Andrew Kim was ordained a priest becoming the first Catholic priest in Korea.

Saint Andrew Kim went back to Korea after his ordination to spread the word of Jesus Christ. He had to secretly preach the gospel to the Korean Christians because of the great danger of torture and death at the time of the Joseon Dynasty. St. Andrew Kim Taegon became one of the thousands of Korean Catholics martyred in Korea. He was only 25 years old when he was tortured and then beheaded by 12 soldiers who sliced Saint Andrew Kim's neck with their swords. After eight sword strikes, Saint Kim's head was severed. St. Andrew Kim's martyrdom took place on September 16, 1846 at Saenamto.

Martyr Saint Andrew Kim Taegon spoke these final words before his martyrdom:

"This is my last hour of life, listen to me attentively: if I have held communication with foreigners, it has been for my religion and for my God. It is for Him that I die. My immortal life is on the point of beginning. Become Christians if you wish to be happy after death, because God has eternal chastisements in store for those who have refused to know Him."

September 21 St. Matthew

In this famous Caravaggio of “The Calling of St. Matthew” we see Matthew pushing away the coins and holding his hand to his chest in a gesture that says to Christ, “Me?” Look up the real one online. It is quite stunning. Remember Matthew turned away from his unfair-tax-collector ways and became a disciple of Christ. He also wrote the first Gospel.



Since Matthew is the patron of bankers, accountants, etc, he is represented by coins. If you can happen to remember to buy chocolate coins when you are at the store this month, you can just stick some of these on a cupcake for his feast day. Could you clean real coins enough to go on cupcakes? I don’t really know—but it is a thought . . .

And because he is the patron of finances, he is a good resource for prayer for those who have careers dealing with money, for those who are struggling managing their money, and even for our country in this time of economic uncertainty.

Prayer to St. Matthew

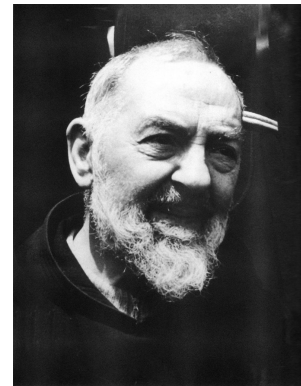
Dear publican become a Saint, after once gathering taxes and tolls how wonderful was your conversion by grace when discarding your earthly possessions you followed the Poor Man of Nazareth. The Mammon of Money is still worshiped. Inspire those responsible for our money with kindness and with the desire to help where they can; for what is done to the least, to the poor, is done to Jesus, the Son of Man. Amen.

September 23 St. Padre Pio

Padre Pio is one of those modern day saints of whom we actually have photos and videos. There is a 2-minute YouTube by Catholic News Agency of this wonderful saint that tells briefly about his life and shows photos of him. You can find it by searching Padre Pio of Pietrelcina. I’m sure the kids will be impressed with his stigmata and incorruptible body, but what really impressed me was his great humility, tireless work, and endless prayers. Truly, truly a saint!

Perhaps you could show this short YouTube at dinner or read another brief biography. He is definitely worth getting to know in your family. Serve this up with an Italian meal!

Here is a short prayer that JP II prayed to him at his beatification. End your dinnertime with this.



Prayer of Pope John Paul II to Saint Pio of Pietrelcina

Padre Pio,

Teach us also, we pray, humility of heart, so that we may be among the humble to whom the Father in the Gospel promised to reveal the mysteries of His Kingdom. Obtain for us the eyes of faith that will help us recognize in the poor and suffering, the very face of Jesus. Support us in our hours of trouble and trial and, should we fall, let us experience the joy of the sacrament of forgiveness. Teach us tender devotion to Mary, mother of Jesus and our Mother. Accompany us on our earthly pilgrimage toward the blessed Homeland, where we too, hope to arrive to contemplate forever the Glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

September 27 St. Vincent DePaul



St. Vincent de Paul (1581-1660) was founder of the Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, Confraternities of Charity, and Ladies of Charity. A man of deep faith, keen intellect, and enormous creativity, he has become known as the "The Apostle of Charity" and "Father of the Poor." His contributions to the training of priests and organizing parish missions and other services for the poor shaped our Church's role in the modern world. I know that our parish has a St. Vincent DePaul Society which collects food and clothing for the poor. You can find out more about this society at www.svdpusa.org. Maybe you can help them out by a donation of money, food, clothing, or time.

September 29 The Archangels

Go to ColoringSaints.org and print out a picture to color.

I thought on this day of celebrating the 3 Archangels, we could remember each one of them throughout the meal. Dessert today should be something angelic like Angel Food Cake. With the number of egg whites in an Angel Food cake, this is one time that I always go for the simplicity, speed, and the money savings of the box mix. When was the last time you made an Angel Food cake? It is very easy and looks like you worked really hard. Serve with thawed frozen strawberries in sugar (or use fresh) and whipped crème.

Our first Archangel that we are going to remember is St. Gabriel. Let's start the meal with the Angelus which begins with Gabriel's greeting. This prayer is traditionally said 3 times a day, 6am, noon, and 6 pm, but really it can be said anytime.

The Angelus

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace,

The Lord is with Thee;

Blessed art thou among women,

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,

Pray for us sinners,

Now and at the hour of our death. Amen

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. And the Word was made Flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.



Next I thought it would be nice to take a break before dessert and either tell or read this retelling of the story of St. Raphael:

Saint Raphael is best known through the beautiful history of the two Tobias, father and son, exiled to Persia in the days of the Assyrian conquest in the eighth century before Christ. In their story, the Archangel plays the major role.

The father Tobias was a faithful son of Jacob and was old and worn out by his manifold good works; for many years he had assisted his fellow exiles in every possible way, even burying the slain of Israel during a persecution by Sennacherib, and continuing this practice despite the wrath that king manifested towards him. Having been stripped of all his possessions, he desired to have his son recover a substantial sum of money he had once lent to a member of his family in a distant city. He needed a companion for the young Tobias. God provided that guide in the Archangel Raphael, whom the son met providentially one day, in the person of a stranger from the very area where he was to go, in the country of the Medes. Raphael to all appearances was a young man like himself, who said his name was Azarias (*Assistance of God*). Everything went well, as proposed; the young Tobias recovered the sum and then was married, during their stay in Media, to the virtuous daughter of another relative, whom Providence had reserved for him.

All aspects of this journey had been thorny with difficulties, but the wise guide had found a way to overcome all of them. When a huge fish threatened to devour Tobias, camped on the shores of the Tigris, the guide told him how to remove it from the water, and the fish expired at his feet; then remedies and provisions were derived from this creature by the directives of Azarias. When the Angel led Tobias for lodging in the city of Rages, to the house of his kinsman Raguel, father of the beautiful Sara, the young man learned that seven proposed husbands had died on the very day of the planned marriage. How would Tobias fare? The Angel reassured him that this would not be his own fate, and told him to pray with his future spouse for three nights, that they might be blessed with a holy posterity. Sara was an only daughter, as Tobias was an only son, and she was endowed with a large heritage.

During the absence of the young Tobias, his father had become blind when the droppings of a pigeon had fallen into his eyes. When the two travelers returned after an extended absence, which had cost his mother many tears, the young Tobias was deeply grieved to find his father unable to see him and his new daughter-in-law. But Raphael told the son how to cure his father's blindness by means of the gall of the fish; and after the remedy had proved efficacious, all of them rejoiced time in their blessings.

When Tobias the son narrated his story and told his father that all their benefits had come to them through this stranger, both father and son wished to give Azarias half of the inheritance. Raphael declined and revealed his identity, saying he was sent to assist the family of the man who had never failed to obey and honor the blessed God of Israel. Raphael, before he disappeared, said to the family: "It is honorable to reveal and confess the works of God. Prayer is good, with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures, for alms deliver from death and purge away sins, and cause the giver to find mercy and life everlasting... When thou didst pray with tears and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner to hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayer to the Lord. And because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that trials prove thee... I am the Angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the Lord."

Quoted from the Magnificat
Source: *The Holy Bible: Old
and New Testaments.*

After your delicious dessert, it is time to end the evening by saying the St. Michael prayer together. This prayer used to be said at the end of every Mass. On Sunday April 24th 1994, Pope John Paul II recommended that this prayer be used by all Catholics as a prayer for the Church, so we should try to say it more frequently.

Perhaps following JP II's advice, we could all say this prayer daily. We say it in the evening before bed as one of our nighttime prayers.



**Saint Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray;
and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host -
by the Divine Power of God -
cast into hell, Satan and all the evil spirits,
who roam throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls.
Amen.**