



Coloma Catholic Life.



Laudato Si Week 16th – 24th May

This week is dedicated to celebrating the encyclical written by Pope Francis, which is all about how we need to care for our common home. To mark the 5th anniversary of the publication of the Encyclical *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis recorded a video message at the start of

the special anniversary year. In it, he addresses Catholic communities around the world.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-03/pope-francis-laudato-si-week.html>

“What kind of world do we want to leave to those who will come after us, to children who are growing up?” Pope Francis asks in the video message. “Motivated by this question”, he says, “I would like to invite you to participate in *Laudato Si'* Week from 16-24 May 2020. It is a global campaign on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the encyclical letter *Laudato si': On the care of our common home.*”

The Pope also renews his urgent call to respond to the ecological crisis: “The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor cannot continue”, he says. “Let's take care of creation, a gift of our good Creator God. Let's celebrate *Laudato Si'* Week together.”



Pope Francis

Prayer Intention for May:

The World of Finance.

‘Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its danger.’

Video:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-05/pope-francis-may-2021-prayer-intention-sustainable-finance.html>

Tweet: ‘On the Feast of the ascension, while we contemplate Heaven, where Christ has ascended and sits at the right hand of the Father, let us ask Mary, queen of Heaven, to help us to be courageous witnesses to the Risen One in the world, I the concrete situations of our life.’

Liturgical Year

Week: Seventh Sunday of Easter.

Colour: White

Here are some links to support this week:

<https://laudatosi.com/watch> this site contains a brief video of Bishop Robert Barron explaining the Catholic teaching behind Laudato Si.

Other useful resources can be found here: <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/laudato-si-year>

Information on the programme of events can be found here <https://laudatosiweek.org>

World Communications Day – Sunday 16th May

Theme

“Come and See” (Jn 1:46)

Communicating by Encountering People as They Are

The theme for the 2021 World Day of Social Communications, chosen by Pope Francis, echoes the words of the Apostle Philip, recognising that authentic communication leads to “encountering people as and where they are”. Taken from the Bible, John 1: 46, the words “Come and see” are central to the Gospel. Before the Gospel is proclaimed, prior to words, there are “looks, testimonies, experiences, encounters and closeness. In a word – life.”

Pope Francis provides the subtitle: *“Communicating, encountering people as and where they are”*.

Pope Francis full message can be found here: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/world-communications-day-2021/popes-communications-message-2021/>

General Intercessions for Communications can be found here:

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/world-communications-day-2021/general-intercessions-world-communications-day-2021/>

Pope Francis Tweet for World Communications Day: *“all of us are responsible for the communications we make, for the information we share, for the control we can exert over fake news by exposing it. All of us are able to be witnesses of the truth: to go, to see and to share.”*

Thy Kingdom Come 13th – 23rd May

This time of prayer for evangelisation has become known as *Thy Kingdom Come* and taps into the first novena we have in the Catholic Church, the [Pentecost Novena](#), traditionally prayed from the Ascension to Pentecost for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Thy Kingdom Come offers us to the opportunity to pray alongside our brothers and sisters from other Christian denominations for people to come closer to Christ. We can do this using the prayers of our own tradition, by going to Mass, or exploring other Catholic forms of prayer. We hope to inspire and enable practicing Catholics to pray for



evangelisation – specifically praying for five members of their family or friends to come closer to Christ – as they pray ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ from the Ascension to Pentecost.

thykingdomcome.global : the official website for *Thy Kingdom Come*

Religious Festivals

Shavuot, The Feast of Weeks/Pentecost – 17th May



Shavuot, also known as the Feast of Weeks or the festival of First Fruits, is a two day festival which falls seven weeks after Pesach – a period of preparation marked by the Counting of the Omer. It celebrates the supreme gift of the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai (Pentecost), and so to the people of Israel who covenanted to follow its teachings. It also marks the end of the spring barley crop and the time when the first wheat harvest was taken to the Temple by all male Jews, since like Pesach and Sukkot this is one of three times of year when pilgrimages to Jerusalem take place. Synagogues are decorated with greenery and flowers and for Orthodox Jews work is not permitted throughout the festival.

Dairy foods, such as blintzes and cheesecakes, are traditionally eaten for at least one meal during Shavuot. No-one is quite sure of the origin of this custom, though some have suggested it is as a reminder that the children of Israel were on their way to a land flowing with milk and honey, and that the gift of the Torah to them was the sweetest of gifts. It is also possible that after their journey through the wilderness no meat was available to them.

During the festival the book of Ruth is read, which records the non-Jewish Ruth’s enthusiastic commitment to throw in her lot with her mother-in-law, thus providing Jews with the prototype of possible conversion to Judaism, and notes that one of the significant descendants of this Moabite convert is King David.

Just as the Israelites spent three days cleansing themselves in preparation for the gift of the Torah (and then had to be awoken by Moses with the blowing of the shofar and a storm of thunder and lightning at the foot of Mount Sinai), so some Jews today ready themselves for this important gift by studying the Torah throughout the night. The threefold nature of scripture (Torah, Prophets and Writings) is also kept in mind at this time, and some welcome the symbolism of threes by eating three cornered ravioli and other dairy foods.

The psalm of praise (the Hallel) and the memorial service (Yizkor) are read on this day, as on all festivals, and the symbolism of the covenant of Marriage between the Almighty and His chosen people is often central to Jewish thought, from disaster. Many Liberal (and American Reform) communities celebrate confirmation for young people at this time, since it was traditionally the occasion when the Jewish People accepted the Torah, and stress the role of education as the foundation of all Jewish life.

Saints of the Week

St John I, Pope and Martyr – 18th May.



On May 18, the Catholic Church honours the first “Pope John” in its history. Saint John I was a martyr for the faith, imprisoned and starved to death by a heretical Germanic king during the sixth century. He was a friend of the renowned Christian philosopher Boethius, who died in a similar manner. Eastern Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Christians also honour Pope St. John I, on the same date as the Roman Catholic Church.

The future Pope John I was born in Tuscany, and served as an Archdeacon in the Church for several years. He was chosen to become the Bishop of Rome in 523, succeeding Pope St. Hormisdas. During his papal reign Italy was ruled by the Ostrogothic King Theodoric. Like many of his fellow tribesmen, the king adhered to the Arian heresy, holding that Christ was a created being rather than the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

Arianism had originated in the Eastern half of the Roman Empire during the fourth century, and subsequently spread among the Western Goths. By the sixth century the heresy was weak in the East, but not dead. In 523, the Byzantine Emperor Justin I ordered Arian clergy to surrender their churches into orthodox Catholic hands. In the West, meanwhile, Theodoric was angered by the emperor’s move, and responded by trying to use the Pope’s authority for his own ends.

Pope John was thus placed in an extremely awkward position. Despite the Pope’s own solid orthodoxy, the Arian king seems to have expected him to intercede with the Eastern emperor on behalf of the heretics. John’s refusal to satisfy King Theodoric would eventually lead to his martyrdom.

John did travel to Constantinople, where he was honoured as St. Peter’s successor by the people, the Byzantine Emperor, and the Church’s legitimate Eastern patriarchs. (The Church of Alexandria had already separated by this point.) The Pope crowned the emperor, and celebrated the Easter liturgy at the Hagia Sophia Church in April of 526.

But while John could urge Justin to treat the Arians somewhat more mercifully, he could not make the kind of demands on their behalf that Theodoric expected. The gothic king, who had recently killed John’s intellectually accomplished friend Boethius (honoured by the Church as St. Severinus Boethius, on Oct. 23), was furious with the Pope when he learned of his refusal to support the Arians in Constantinople. Already exhausted by his travels, the Pope was imprisoned in Ravenna and deprived of food. The death of St. John I came on or around May 18.

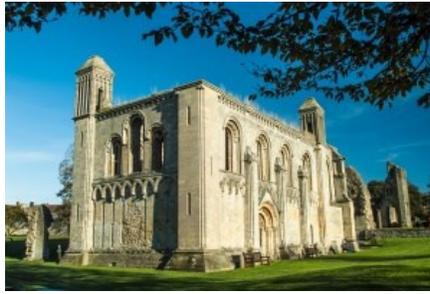
St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury – 19th May

Saint Dunstan is fairly unusual among Anglo-Saxon saints in that we know where, if not precisely when, he was born. Dunstan was born in the village of Baltonsborough, Somerset, just a few miles south of Glastonbury, probably about the year 909 or 910. [Note: the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle gives the birth date as 925].

His father Heorstan was a Wessex nobleman of royal blood, and his family connections were to be of great benefit to him in his later career in the church. Glastonbury was at



that time a popular place for Christian pilgrimage; folk traditions told that it was the first place of Christian settlement in Britain, and associated it with Joseph of Arimathea and Jesus himself.



Glastonbury Abbey

The Abbey at Glastonbury was a centre of learning and housed scholars from as far away as Ireland. The young Dunstan was educated at Glastonbury and then joined his uncle Athelm, Archbishop of Canterbury, at the royal court of King Athelstan.

Dunstan took to the monastic life much later than most; taking holy orders in 943, when he may already have reached 34 years. Apparently he was at first disinclined to a life in the church, but a skin disease which he feared might be leprosy made him change his mind. After taking orders Dunstan returned to Glastonbury and built himself a small cell (i.e. a hut) beside the Abbey church. There he lived a simple life of manual labour and devotion. He soon showed great skill in the arts of metalworking, and he used his skills to craft bells and vessels for the church.

His life was not to stay simple for long; Athelstan died, and his successor Edmund called Dunstan to his court to act as a priest. After a short period at court, Edmund named Dunstan Abbot of Glastonbury. Once more Dunstan returned to the place of his birth, this time on a mission to reinvigorate the abbey. He instituted the strict Benedictine Rule, rebuilt and enlarged the church buildings, and established Glastonbury as a leading centre of learning and scholasticism. The effect of Dunstan's reforms, and in particular his efforts to produce a class of educated clerics, did much to encourage the growth of monastic settlements throughout Britain.

Dunstan acted as a royal advisor and negotiator for Edmund and his successor Eadred, and helped establish a period of peace from Danish attack. In 955 Dunstan's zeal got him into trouble when he reprovved young King Eadwig for moral laxity. Eadwig promptly confiscated Dunstan's property and exiled the monk. Dunstan found shelter at the monastery of Ghent, in modern Belgium, but he was quickly called back to Britain by Edgar, king of Northumbria and Mercia.

Edgar shared Dunstan's monastic zeal, and together they put considerable energy into monastic reform and expansion. Under Edgar's influence, Dunstan became Bishop of Worcester, and when Eadwig considerably died in 960, Dunstan was named Archbishop of Canterbury. In this post, Dunstan carried on his work of encouraging scholarship and monastic settlements. He also oversaw every detail of Edgar's coronation as king.

It is said that he designed the coronation crown himself, and more importantly, that he altered the ceremony to put emphasis on the bond between church and monarch; making the coronation a sacred act, emulating the ceremony of consecration for priests. Dunstan's coronation ceremony still forms the basis of royal coronations today.

When Edgar died, Dunstan carried on as an advisor to his son Edward, but when Edward was murdered in 978 to make way for his brother Ethelred, Dunstan retired from court life. He lived on at Canterbury, delighting in teaching the young and only rarely troubling to involve himself in the politics of the realm. When he died in 988 Dunstan was buried in his cathedral, where his tomb was a popular place of pilgrimage throughout the Middle Ages. Until Thomas Becket later eclipsed Dunstan's fame he was the most popular English saint.

He gained fame for the many stories of his greatness, not least among which were those concerning his famed cunning in defeating the Devil. English literature contains many references to him, for example in A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, and in this folk rhyme:

St Dunstan, as the story goes,
Once pull'd the devil by the nose
With red-hot tongs, which made him roar,
That he was heard three miles or more.

Another story relates how Dunstan nailed a horseshoe to the Devil's hoof when he was asked to re-shoe the Devil's horse. This caused the Devil great pain, and Dunstan only agreed to remove the shoe and release the Devil after he promised never to enter a place where a horseshoe is over the door. This is claimed as the origin of the lucky horseshoe.

St Bernardine of Sienna, Priest – 20th May

Most of the saints suffer great personal opposition, even persecution. Bernardine, by contrast, seems more like a human dynamo who simply took on the needs of the world. He was the greatest preacher of his time, journeying across Italy, calming strife-torn cities, attacking the paganism he found rampant, attracting crowds of 30,000, following Saint Francis of Assisi's admonition to preach about "vice and virtue, punishment and glory."



Compared with Saint Paul by the Pope, Bernardine had a keen intuition of the needs of the time, along with solid holiness and boundless energy and joy. He accomplished all this despite having a very weak and hoarse voice, miraculously improved later because of his devotion to Mary.

When he was 20, the plague was at its height in his hometown of Siena. Sometimes as many as 20 people died in one day at the hospital. Bernardine offered to run the hospital and, with the help of other young men, nursed patients there for four months. He escaped the plague, but was so exhausted that a fever confined him for several months. He spent another year caring for a beloved aunt whose parents had died when he was a child, and at her death began to fast and pray to know God's will for him.

At 22, he entered the Franciscan Order and was ordained two years later. For almost a dozen years he lived in solitude and prayer, but his gifts ultimately caused him to be sent to preach. He always travelled on foot, sometimes speaking for hours in one place, then doing the same in another town.

Especially known for his devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus, Bernardine devised a symbol—IHS, the first three letters of the name of Jesus in Greek—in Gothic letters on a blazing sun. This was to displace the superstitious symbols of the day, as well as the insignia of factions: for example, Guelphs and Ghibellines. The devotion spread, and the symbol began to appear in churches, homes and public buildings. Opposition arose from those who thought it a dangerous innovation. Three attempts were made to have the pope take action against him, but Bernardine’s holiness, orthodoxy, and intelligence were evidence of his faithfulness.

General of the Friars of the Strict Observance, a branch of the Franciscan Order, Bernardine strongly emphasized scholarship and further study of theology and canon law. When he started there were 300 friars in the community; when he died there were 4,000. He returned to preaching the last two years of his life, dying while travelling.

St Christopher Magallanes and his Companions, Apostle – 21st May



The governor of Mexico’s Tabasco state in the 1920s, Garrido Canabal, was so insanely anti-Catholic that he named his three sons Lenin, Satan, and Lucifer. He was also a farmer and named one of his bulls “God,” a hog “Pope,” a cow “Mary,” and a donkey “Christ.” He ordered the removal and destruction of all crucifixes from public buildings and graveyards in Tabasco. Painful photographs of the destruction prove that it happened. For his vicious persecution of the Church, he was elevated to a national cabinet position in the 1930s. Canabal was a political protégé of the Mexican president, and later strongman, Plutarco Calles. Calles was an illegitimate child, born to unmarried parents. Calles hated being called an illegitimate child and especially resented the Roman Catholic Church for this title of illegitimacy. In time, Calles became a devout believer in the religion of atheism, eagerly shared his beliefs with others, and put great energy into evangelizing others to his side. As governor of the state of Sonora, he expelled all Catholic priests. As president of Mexico, he carried out an overtly violent, ferocious, scorched-earth attack on Catholicism without par in the twentieth century. Priests were killed for no other reason than for being priests. This led to a popular counterreaction known as the Cristero War, a slow burn of assassinations, pitched battles, skirmishes, and reprisals. Central Mexico was in a full-blown meltdown in the 1920s.

Father Magallanes was a priest of humble origins similar to those of Calles. After working the land as a youth for his poor family, he entered the seminary and was ordained a priest in 1899. He then served faithfully as a chaplain and pastor for many years. But the otherwise ordinary arc of his life took an extraordinary turn when, on May 21, 1927, he was on his way to celebrate the Feast of St. Rita of Cascia in a small village. A shootout between Cristeros and Federal forces near the village led to Father Magallanes’ arrest, along with a brother priest, Father Caloca. There were no accusations and no trial. There was neither the presentation of evidence nor the right of defence, since priests had no civil rights in Mexico at the time.

On May 25, 1927, the two priests were led to the courtyard of a municipal building for what always happened next. Father Magallanes stated: “I am innocent and die innocent. I absolve with all my heart those who seek

my death and ask God that my blood bring peace to a divided Mexico.” The priests absolved each other, spoke some few words of comfort, and then were shot to death by a firing squad of fellow Mexicans in soldiers’ uniforms. Father Caloca’s last words were: “For God we lived and for Him we die.”

Twenty-five martyrs are also commemorated. All were diocesan priests, except for three laymen who died with their parish priest. They were all Cristeros. They died in eight different Mexican states under circumstances similar to those of Frs. Magallanes and Caloca.

Pope Saint John Paul II beatified the group in 1992 and canonized them in 2000. In addition to Frs. Magallanes (Cristóbal Magallanes Jara) and Caloca (Agustín Caloca Cortés), these martyrs were: Román Adame Rosales, Rodrigo Aguilar Alemán, Julio Álvarez Mendoza, Luis Batis Sáinz, Mateo Correa Magallanes, Atilano Cruz Alvarado, Miguel De La Mora, Pedro Esqueda Ramírez, Margarito Flores Garcia, José Isabel Flores Varela, David Galván Bermúdez, Salvador Lara Puente (layman), Pedro de Jesús Maldonado Lucero, Jesús Méndez Montoya, Manuel Morales (layman), Justino Orona Madrigal, Sabás Reyes Salazar, José María Robles Hurtado, David Roldán Lara (layman), Toribio Romo González, Jenaro Sánchez Delgadillo, David Uribe Velasco, and Tranquilino Ubiarco Robles.

St Rita of Cascia – 22nd May



Saint Rita was born Margherita Lotti in Roccaporena, Italy in 1381. The day after her baptism, Rita was surrounded by a swarm of white bees, which went in and out of her infant mouth without hurting her. Rather than being alarmed, her family believed she was marked to be virtuous and devoted to God.

At an early age, she begged her parents to allow her to enter a convent but was instead arranged to be married to a cruel man named Paolo Mancini. Young Rita became a wife and mother at only twelve years of age and her husband was a man of violent temper. In anger, he often mistreated Rita verbally and physically. He was also known to pursue other women and he had many enemies.

Paolo had many enemies in Cascia, but Rita's influence over him eventually led him to be a better man. He even renounced a family feud between the Mancinis and Chiquis. Unfortunately, the feud between the Mancini and Cascia family grew turbulent and one of Paolo's allies betrayed and killed him. Following her husband's death, Rita gave his murderers a public pardon, but Paolo's brother, Bernardo, was still angry and encouraged Rita's two sons, Giovanni Antonio and Paulo Maria, to join the feud. Under their uncle's leadership, each boy became more and more like their father had been before Rita married him, and they wanted to avenge their father's murder. Rita attempted to stop them, but both of her sons were determined to revenge their slain father. Rita prayed to God, asking Him to take her sons before they lost their souls to the mortal sin of murder. One year later, her prayers were answered when both of her sons fell prey to dysentery and died.

Following the deaths of her sons, Rita attempted to enter the monastery of Saint Mary Magdalene in Cascia, but she was not allowed to join. Though Rita's character and piety were recognized, her husband's association with the family feud was greatly feared. When Rita persisted, the convent told her she could join if she could find a way to mend the wound between the Chiquis and Mancinis. After asking John the Baptist, Augustine of Hippo, and Nicholas of Tolentino to help her in her task, she attempted to end the feud.

The bubonic plague had been spreading through Italy at that time, and when Bernardo Mancini became infected, he finally abolished the feud with the Chiqui family. Once the conflict was resolved, Rita was allowed to enter the monastery at the age of thirty-six. It is said that she was transported into the monastery of Saint Magdalene through levitation at night by the three patron saints she appealed to.

While at the monastery, Rita performed her duties faithfully and received the sacraments frequently. Rita had a great devotion to the Passion of Christ, and one day, when she was sixty-year-old, she asked, "Please let me suffer like you, Divine Saviour." After her request, a wound appeared on her forehead, as if a thorn from Christ's crown had pierced her. It left a deep wound, which did not heal, and it caused her to suffer until the day she died. It is said that as she neared the end of her life, Rita was bedridden from tuberculosis. It was then that she asked a cousin who had come to visit for a rose from the garden in her old home. As it was January, her cousin did not expect to find any roses, but there was a single rose in bloom, which was brought back to Rita at the convent. She died four months later, on May 22, 1457.

Following her death, she was buried at the basilica of Cascia, and was later discovered to be incorrupt. Her body can be found today in the Saint Rita shrine at Cascia.



May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope.

– Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 244