



Coloma Catholic Life.

Poverty is not an accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is man-made and can be removed by the actions of human beings.

- Nelson Mandela



World Day of the Poor: solidarity and closeness to those in need – Sunday 15th November

Ahead of the annual World Day of the Poor, marked on Sunday, Archbishop Rino Fisichella highlights the importance of caring for the poor with “outstretched” hands in a spirit of charity and solidarity.

Below is an article written by Vatican News staff writer

To prepare for the fourth commemoration of this annual event, the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization organized a press conference at the Vatican on Thursday, presenting the initiatives for the World Day. The speakers at the event included Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, and Msgr. Graham Bell, the Under-secretary of the same Pontifical Council.



Pope Francis' Message

Pope Francis established the World Day in his Apostolic Letter, *Misericordia et Misera*, issued on 20 November 2016 to celebrate the end of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. On 13 June this year, he issued a message for the observance themed: “Stretch forth your hand to the poor.”

During his speech, Archbishop Fisichella underscored the Pope’s idea that “a hand held out is a sign” – one that speaks of closeness, solidarity and love. He said that especially in these times of the coronavirus, Pope Francis pointed out that the outstretched hands of physicians, administrators, pharmacists, volunteers and priests among others, have “defied contagion and fear in order to offer support and consolation,” because “now is a good time to recover the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world.”

Pope Francis

Prayer Intention for November:

Artificial Intelligence.

‘We pray that the progress of robots and artificial intelligence may always serve humankind.’

Video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9te7U_Dngeo

Tweet: “Hold out your hand to the poor, instead of demanding what you lack. In this way you will multiply the talents you receive.”

Liturgical Year

Week: 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Colour: Green



He also added that the Pope's message can be of inspiration to better understand some of the initiatives that have been taken to offer concrete support and help to families who find themselves in objective difficulty.

Closeness to the poor

The Archbishop highlighted some of the Church's concrete gestures of closeness to those in need, especially in commemoration of the annual World Day. He noted for example, that the poor who have access to dormitories, or who want to return to their homeland can be tested with the "cotton swab test" in the clinic under the colonnade of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Also, with the support of generous donors, packages of basic necessities, including food items and face masks, have been made available for distribution to those in need. The Archbishop added that the World Day of the Poor, though limited in its initiatives, is a day when dioceses around the world express their fraternity with marginalized and disadvantaged people. He also stressed that the *Pastoral Aid* prepared to assist parishes can be a timely instrument so that the World Day is not limited to charitable initiatives alone but is also supported by "personal and community prayer that can never be lacking in order for our witness to be complete and effective."

Keeping our "end" in mind.



Archbishop Fisichella recalled Pope Francis' words inspired by the book of Sirach: "In everything you do, remember your end." These, he explained can be understood in two ways: First, that our lives will come to our end sooner or later and keeping that in mind can inspire us to live a life of concern for the poor.

"The 'end' of all our actions can only be love... This love is one of sharing, dedication and service, born of the realization that we were first loved and awakened to love," Archbishop Fisichella said.

It is in this spirit that an outstretched hand can be "enriched by the smile of those who quietly and unassumingly offer to help, inspired only by the joy of living as one of Christ's disciples." This also is the spirit that we are invited to live in this fourth World Day of the Poor.

The *Pastoral Aid* has been translated into English, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Polish and it is [available for download](#) on the website of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization.

Book of Life

In the Chapel there is a 'Book of Life' which contains the names of those who have died. We try to update this book regularly. If there is someone you wish to have included in the book please email Mrs Horsman at horsman@coloma.croydon.sch.uk giving the name of the person and, where possible, the date and year of death.



Children's Hospital Pyjamas

Miss Coleman is organising for the collection of new children's pyjamas from Wednesday 4th November to Wednesday 25th November for the registered charity Children's Hospital Pyjamas. The purpose is to provide a new set of pyjamas for children who are in hospital over Christmas. The charity collect Pyjamas for hospitals all over the country but a local Croydon Mum started this charity as her daughter spent a Christmas in hospital, so she wanted to give back to Croydon University Hospital and children in similar situations. Donations are being collected within form groups; there are also collection points in the Sixth Form Reception, the dining room and staff room.

At this time it is difficult to purchase the PJs at the shops so there is an Amazon wishlist

<https://amzn.eu/eSK37r6> which has been created by the charity so they can be purchased online and the girls can bring them in when delivered.

Saints of the Week

St Margaret of Scotland, 16th November – House Saint



Margaret was born in 1046 and was a member of an ancient English royal family. She was a direct descendant of King Alfred and was the granddaughter of King Edmund Ironside of England through his son Edward. Along with her family Margaret had been exiled to the eastern continent when King Canute and his Danish army had overrun England. Beautiful and devout she was also intelligent receiving her formal education in Hungary.

Margaret and her family returned to England towards the end of the reign of her great-uncle, Edward the Confessor, as her younger brother Edgar the Aetheling, had a very strong claim to the English throne. As some of the last remaining Saxon Royals in England, Margaret and her family's position was precarious and fearing for their lives they fled northwards, in the opposite direction to the advancing Normans. They were heading back to the continent from Northumbria when their ship was blown off course and landed in Fife.

The Scottish King, Malcolm III, known as Malcolm Canmore, offered his protection to the royal family. Malcolm was particularly protective towards Margaret! She initially refused his proposals of marriage, preferring, according to one account, a life of piety as a virgin. Malcolm however was a persistent king, and the couple finally married in Dunfermline in 1069.

Their union was exceptionally happy and fruitful for both themselves and the Scottish nation. Margaret brought with her some of the finer points of current European manners, ceremony and culture to the Scottish Court, which highly improved its civilised reputation. Queen Margaret was renowned for her moderating and good influence on her husband and also for her devout piety and religious observance. She was a prime mover in the reform of the Church in Scotland.

Under Queen Margaret's leadership Church councils promoted Easter communion and, much to joy of the working-class, abstinence from servile work on a Sunday. Margaret founded churches, monasteries and pilgrimage hostels and established the Royal Mausoleum at Dunfermline Abbey with monks from Canterbury. She was especially fond of Scottish saints and instigated the Queen's Ferry over the Forth so that pilgrims could more easily reach the Shrine of St. Andrew.

Mass was changed from the many dialects of Gaelic spoken throughout Scotland to the unifying Latin. By adopting Latin to celebrate the Mass she believed that all Scots could worship together in unity, along with the other Christians of Western Europe. Many people believe that in doing this, it was not only Queen Margaret's goals to unite the Scots, but also Scotland and England in an attempt to end the bloody warfare between the two countries.

In setting the agenda for the church in Scotland Queen Margaret also ensured the dominance of the Roman Church over the native Celtic Church in the north of the country.

Margaret was very pious and cared especially for the poor and orphans. It was this piety that caused considerable damage to her health with the repeated fasting and abstinence. In 1093, as she lay on her deathbed after a long illness, she was told that her husband and eldest son had been ambushed and treacherously killed at the Battle of Alnwick in Northumbria. She died shortly after aged just forty-seven.

She was buried alongside Malcolm in Dunfermline Abbey and the reported miracles that took place in and around her tomb supported her canonization in 1250 by Pope Innocent IV.

St Elizabeth of Hungary, 17th November



St. Elizabeth of Hungary, also known as St. Elizabeth of Thuringia, was born in Hungary on July 7, 1207 to the Hungarian King Andrew II and Gertrude of Merania. As soon as her life began, she had responsibilities from being a royal pressed upon her. While Elizabeth was very young, her father arranged for her to be married to Ludwig IV of Thuringia, a German nobleman. Because of this plan, Elizabeth was sent away at the age of four for education at the court of the Landgrave of Thuringia.

Elizabeth's mother, Gertrude, was murdered in 1213, when Elizabeth was just six-years-old. According to history, the murder was carried out by Hungarian noblemen due to the conflict between Germans and the Hungarian nobles. From this point on, Elizabeth's perspective on life and death dramatically changed and she sought peace with prayer. Happiness was returned to her young life in 1221 when she was formally married to Ludwig, whom she deeply loved. Together the couple had three beautiful children, two of whom became members of nobility and the third entering the religious life, becoming abbess of a German convent.

Elizabeth continued to live a life full of prayer and a service to the poor. Ludwig, who was now one of the rulers of Thuringia, supported all of Elizabeth's religious endeavours even though she was a part of the royal court. She began to lead an austere simple life, practiced penance, and devoted herself to works of charity. She used her royal position to advance her mission for charity. In 1223, Franciscan friars arrived in Thuringia and taught 16-year-old Elizabeth all about Francis of Assisi's ideals. She then forth decided to live her life mirroring his. She wore simple clothing and set aside time every day to take bread to hundreds of poor people in her land. Ludwig and Elizabeth were politically powerful and lived with a remarkable generosity toward the poor.

In 1226, when disease and floods struck Thuringia, Elizabeth took to caring for the victims. It is said she even gave away the royal's clothing and goods to the afflicted people. Elizabeth had a hospital built and provided for almost a thousand poor people daily. Elizabeth's life was full of love and faith. However, tragedy struck when Ludwig died from illness in 1227. It is said upon hearing the news, she said, "He is dead. He is dead. It is to me as if the whole world died today." His remains were entombed at the Abbey of Reinhardsbrunn.

Elizabeth vowed to never remarry and to live a life similar to a nun, despite pressure from relatives. Her vows included celibacy and an agreement of complete obedience to her confessor and spiritual director, Master Conrad of Marburg. His treatment of Elizabeth was very strict and often harsh. He held her to a standard that

many saw as impossible to meet. He provided physical beatings and sent away her children. However, she continued to keep her vow, even offering to cut off her own nose, so she would be too ugly for any man to want.

In 1228, Elizabeth joined the Third Order of St. Francis. Elizabeth, having received her dowry, founded a hospital in honour of St. Francis, where she personally attended to the ill. She ministered to the sick and provided support to the poor. Elizabeth's life was consumed deeply by her devotion to God and her charitable labour. She died at the age of 24, on November 17, 1231 in Marburg, Hesse.

One of her greatest known miracles occurred when she was still alive, the miracle of roses. It is said that during one of her many trips delivering bread to the poor in secret, Ludwig met with her and asked her questions to erase everyone's suspicions that she was stealing treasures from the castle. He asked her to reveal the contents under her cloak, and as she did a vision of white and red roses was seen. To Ludwig, this meant God's protection was evident. In other versions, it was her brother-in-law who found her. Elizabeth's story is one of the first of many that associates Christian saints with roses. Another living miracle involved a leper lying in the bed she shared with her husband. Her mother-in-law discovered Elizabeth had placed a leper in the bed and feeling enraged, she informed Ludwig. Annoyed with the situation, Ludwig removed the bedclothes and instantly the "Almighty God opened the eyes of his soul, and instead of a leper he saw the figure of Christ crucified stretched upon the bed."

After her death, miraculous healings began to occur at her graveside near her hospital. Examinations were held for those who had been healed from 1232 to 1235. The investigations, along with testimony from Elizabeth's handmaidens and companions and the immense popularity surrounding her, provided enough reason for her canonization. Pope Gregory IX canonized her on May 27, 1235.

Elizabeth is the patron saint of bakers; beggars; brides; charities; death of children; homeless people; hospitals; Sisters of Mercy; widows.

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary , 21st November

This feast highlights the holiness of Mary from the beginning of her life on earth that continued through her early childhood and beyond. It is celebrated both in the Roman and the Eastern Orthodox rites. In the East it takes its origin from the dedication of the Church of Our Lady near the Temple area in Jerusalem which took place on 21st November 543. The Eastern Church took it up as a celebration of Mary's presentation to God in the Temple at the age of three, a non-biblical story from the apocryphal Gospel of James in which we read that her parents offered Mary to God in the Temple when she was three years old. This was to carry out a promise made to God when Anna was still childless. Established in the West late in the Middle Ages, the feast was universally observed by the sixteenth century. It celebrates Mary in her grace-filled life, wholly given over to the Holy Spirit from the time of her conception. The feast is best linked with the other feasts of the birth of Mary (8th September) and of the Immaculate Conception (8th December). It highlights the holiness of Mary from the beginning of her life on earth that continued through her early childhood and beyond.



The Eastern Church has a special icon for this feast included in the top of the iconostasis in every church. This stresses that Mary from the beginning of her life was dedicated to God. She became a greater temple than any made by human hands. God came to dwell in her in a marvellous way and sanctified her for her unique role in God's saving work. At the same time, the magnificence of Mary redounds on her children. They, too, are temples of God and sanctified so that they may enjoy and share in God's saving work.

Prayer for the World Day of the Poor

Loving God,
You hear the cry of each of your children,
and especially those who are poor and suffering.
We pray that we too might hear the cries of people in need:
The family crying out for food...
The migrant child crying out for his mother...
The youth crying out for education...
The farmer crying out for rains for his harvest...
The trafficked and abused, crying out for freedom...
All who are poor and vulnerable, crying out for help...
Lord, open our hearts that we may hear
the cries of the poor as you do
and respond as your hands and feet on earth.
In your name we pray,
Amen.

