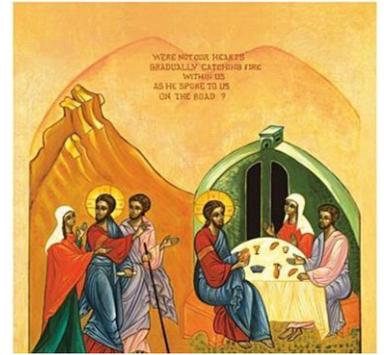




# Coloma Catholic Life.



## Sunday of the Word of God - 24<sup>th</sup> January

***“Let us not ignore God’s word! It is a love letter, written to us by the One who knows us best. In reading it, we again hear his voice, see his face and receive his Spirit.”***

Pope Francis asks us all to meditate on the place of the Word of God in our lives today. In his letter ***Aperuit illis***, instituting the Sunday of the Word of God, he explains how our reading of Sacred Scripture depends on the action and presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Recalling the message in Luke’s Gospel about the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13 – 35) Pope Francis explains: ***Jesus appeared to the assembled disciples, broke bread with them and opened their minds to the understanding of the sacred Scriptures. To them, amid their fear and bewilderment, he unveiled the meaning of the paschal mystery.*** He further explains: ***At the conclusion of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, I proposed setting aside “a Sunday given over entirely to the word of God, so as to appreciate the inexhaustible riches contained in that constant dialogue between the Lord and his people” (Misericordia et Misera, 7). Devoting a specific Sunday of the liturgical year to the word of God can enable the Church to experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world.***



### Pope Francis

Prayer Intention for January:

#### Human Fraternity.

‘May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.’

Video:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-01/pope-s-january-prayer-intention-at-the-service-of-fraternity.html>

**Tweet:** ‘May the word of God sown in the soil of our hearts, lead us to turn to sow hope through closeness to others. Just as God has done with us.’

#### Liturgical Year

Week: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Colour: Green

Pope Francis emphasises that as Christian disciples we need to know and love the Scriptures, just as we must know and love Jesus: ***A profound bond links sacred Scripture and the faith of believers. Since faith comes from hearing, and what is heard is based on the word of Christ (cf. Rom 10:17), believers are bound to listen attentively to the word of the Lord, both in the celebration of the liturgy and in their personal prayer and reflection.***

***The journey that the Risen Lord makes with the disciples of Emmaus ended with a meal. The mysterious wayfarer accepts their insistent request: “Stay with us, for it is almost evening and the day is now far spent” (Lk 24:29). They sit down at table, and Jesus takes the bread, blesses it, breaks it and offers it to them. At that moment, their eyes are opened, and they recognize him (cf. v. 31). This scene clearly demonstrates the unbreakable bond between sacred Scripture and the Eucharist. As the Second Vatican Council teaches, “the Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures as she has venerated the Lord’s body, in that she never ceases, above all in the sacred liturgy, to partake of the bread of life and to offer it to the faithful from the one table of the word of God and the body of Christ” (Dei Verbum, 21).***

He concludes: ***we urgently need to grow in our knowledge and love of the Scriptures and of the risen Lord, who continues to speak his word and to break bread in the community of believers... Christ Jesus is knocking at our door in the works of sacred Scriptures. God’s word has the power to open our eyes and to enable us to renounce a stifling and barren individualism and instead embark on a new path of sharing and solidarity.***

The full text can be found at: [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu\\_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190930\\_aperuit-illis.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190930_aperuit-illis.html)



An icon of the encounter with Jesus on the road to Emmaus was chosen as the official logo for the worldwide celebration of the Sunday of the Word of God.

The colourful logo is based on an icon written by the late-Benedictine Sr Marie-Paul Farran, a member of the Our Lady of Calvary Congregation, who lived and worked at its monastery on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

## Echoes of God: Journeying with the Word of God

Run by David McLoughlin this is a journey through the whole Bible over the course of seven weeks. The course can be downloaded via the link below:

<https://www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-god-who-speaks/focus/sunday-of-the-word-of-god/echoes-of-god-journeying-with-the-word-of-god/>



By his side are two disciples: Cleopas and his wife, Mary. They both fix their gaze on Christ.

There is a star overhead symbolising evangelisation and the "permanent light" that guides their journey and shows them the way.

Mary is holding one hand upward and with her other hand seems to be touching the Lord, reaffirming that he has fulfilled the ancient promises and is the living Word that must be proclaimed to the world.



Cleopas holds a stick to indicate "a pilgrimage." His free hand is pointing the road ahead, which all disciples are called to take in order to bring the Good News to everyone.

The Resurrected Christ is holding in his left hand a scroll, which is "the sacred Scripture that found its fulfilment in his person."

### The Mark 10 Mission

The Mark 10 Mission, in partnership with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, has been able to commit to creating content for the Spring 2021 Term. Each week they provide a video about the Sunday Gospel. Each session includes an introduction, the reading of the Gospel, a reflection and a hymn. All resources are free to access here: <https://www.themark10mission.co.uk/>

### Columban Missionary Society Image and Writing Competition



'Let's Create a World Without Racism' is the theme for a schools' competition launched by the Columban Missionary Society. It is open to young people aged 14-18. You can learn more about the competition, closing date: 20th February 2021) and the Columbans here:

<https://columbans.co.uk/education/4919/columbans-launch-schools-media-competition-endracism/>

## Chaplaincy and Youth Work Apprenticeship for September 2021.

The Education Commission are now in the planning process with St Mary's University to develop a **Chaplaincy and Youth Work Apprenticeship for September 2021**. If you know anyone who might be thinking about being a Chaplain or Youth Worker, please ask them to register their interest on our website <https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/chaplaincy-apprenticeship/>

## Christian Leadership Formation

A new programme is being offered to Lower-Sixth students who are committed to their faith and who are aspiring to some form of public life. The programme was conceived of by The Lord Alton of Liverpool, is being offered by The Christian Heritage Centre in partnership with St Mary's University, Twickenham (London), the Catholic Union of Great Britain, and other Catholic organisations and academics. It will consist of several residential modules offering philosophical and theological formation, as well as important practical skills and insights. This year's programme commences in July, and applications are now open until 31st March.

For further information and for the application pack, visit: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/clf/> or contact [clf@christianheritagecentre.com](mailto:clf@christianheritagecentre.com)

## Religious Festivals This Week

### Honen Memorial Day – Buddhism, 25<sup>th</sup> January

Honen Bo Genku (1133-1212 CE), more familiarly known as **Honen**, was part of the movement—along that resulted in the uniquely Japanese forms of Buddhism. Born in 1133 CE, Honen Bo Genku entered monastic life at age 13, and for the next thirty years he underwent intensive training in Tendai Buddhism.

At age 43, following exposure to the Pure Land teachings of the Chinese Master Shan-Tao, Honen broke with the centres of Buddhism patronized by the royal court and military authorities to pursue his own spiritual vision. In the spring of 1175, he founded *Jodo Shu* in Japan, the way of salvation by a power beyond the individual.

Honen taught that rebirth in the Pure Land was certain for anyone who recited the name with complete trust and sincerity. He believed that most people, himself included, could not achieve liberation on their own. He eliminated the intellectual difficulties and complex meditation practices used by other schools of Buddhism, teaching that the only way to achieve buddhahood was with the help of Amida. The result was a form of Buddhism accessible to anyone. Honen's teachings attracted many, including not only priests and nobles, but also warriors, fishermen, prostitutes and other social outcasts. Those who followed Jodo-Shu believed that constant repetition of the nembutsu would lead to their salvation.



### Holocaust Memorial Day – Judaism, 27<sup>th</sup> January



Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) takes place each year on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) encourages remembrance in a world scarred by genocide. They promote and support Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) – the international day on 27 January to remember the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, alongside the millions of other people killed under Nazi Persecution and in subsequent genocides

in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

27th January marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. It also marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia.

The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2021 is **Be the light in the darkness**. It encourages everyone to reflect on the depths humanity can sink to, but also the ways individuals and communities resisted that darkness to 'be the light' before, during and after genocide.

**Be the light in the darkness** is an affirmation and a call to action for everyone marking HMD. This theme asks us to consider different kinds of 'darkness', for example, identity-based persecution, misinformation, denial of justice; and different ways of 'being the light', for example, resistance, acts of solidarity, rescue and illuminating mistruths.

Increasing levels of denial, division and misinformation in today's world mean we must remain vigilant against hatred and identity-based hostility. Rapid technological developments, a turbulent political climate, and world events beyond our control can leave us feeling helpless and insignificant. The utterly unprecedented times through which we are living currently are showing the very best of which humanity is capable but also - in some of the abuse and conspiracy theories being spread on social media - the much darker side of our world as well.

We can all stand in solidarity. We can choose to **be the light in the darkness** in a variety of ways and places – at home, in public, and online.

Further information and resources can be found here:

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/what-is-holocaust-memorial-day/>

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/HMD-2021-Theme-vision.pdf>

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/HMD-2021-Theme-vision-summary.pdf>



HOLOCAUST  
MEMORIAL  
DAY TRUST

## Tu B 'Shevat Day – Judaism, 28<sup>th</sup> January



A popular minor festival which celebrates the New Year for trees. Jewish tradition marks the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shevat as the day when the sap in the trees begins to rise, heralding the beginning of spring. It is customary for Jews all over the world to plant young trees at this time and to eat fruit produced in Israel. For religious accounting purposes all trees have their anniversaries on this festival, regardless of when they were planted.

## Saints of the Week

### Conversion of St Paul - 25<sup>th</sup> January

Paul, the “Apostle of the Gentiles,” was born in Tarsus, capital city of the Roman province of Cilicia, in southeast Asia Minor. A strict Pharisee who was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, we first find him in Jerusalem, where he was present at and consented to the death of the Christian martyr Stephen. He then began a vicious campaign of persecution against Christians. As Paul – who before his Christian conversion was known as Saul – was on the road to Damascus to extend his ravages, he suddenly saw a blinding light and fell to the ground, hearing Jesus speak to him. He was then led by hand, blind, to Damascus, where a Christian named Ananias met him. Paul was cured of his blindness, believed in Jesus, and was baptized.



### Saints Timothy and Titus, Bishops - 26<sup>th</sup> January



What we know from the New Testament of Timothy’s life makes it sound like that of a modern harried bishop. He had the honour of being a fellow apostle with Paul, both sharing the privilege of preaching the gospel and suffering for it.

Timothy had a Greek father and a Jewish mother named Eunice. Being the product of a “mixed” marriage, he was considered illegitimate by the Jews. It was his grandmother, Lois, who first became Christian. Timothy was a convert of Paul around the year 47 and later joined him in his apostolic work. He was with Paul at the founding of the Church in Corinth. During the 15 years he worked with Paul, he became one of his most faithful and trusted friends. He was sent on difficult missions by Paul—often in the face of great disturbance in local churches which Paul had founded.

Timothy was with Paul in Rome during the latter’s house arrest. At some period, Timothy himself was in prison (Hebrews 13:23). Paul installed him as his representative at the Church of Ephesus. Timothy was comparatively young for the work he was doing. Several references seem to indicate that he was timid. And one of Paul’s most frequently quoted lines was addressed to him: “Stop drinking only water but have a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses” (1 Timothy 5:23).

Titus has the distinction of being a close friend and disciple of Paul as well as a fellow missionary. He was Greek, apparently from Antioch. Even though Titus was a Gentile, Paul would not let him be forced to undergo circumcision at Jerusalem. Titus is seen as a peacemaker, administrator, great friend. Paul’s second letter to Corinth affords an insight into the depth of his friendship with Titus, and the great fellowship they had in preaching the gospel.

When Paul was having trouble with the community at Corinth, Titus was the bearer of Paul’s severe letter and was successful in smoothing things out. Paul writes he was strengthened not only by the arrival of Titus but

also “by the encouragement with which he was encouraged in regard to you, as he told us of your yearning, your lament, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.... And his heart goes out to you all the more, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, when you received him with fear and trembling” (2 Corinthians 7:7a, 15).

The Letter to Titus addresses him as the administrator of the Christian community on the island of Crete, charged with organizing it, correcting abuses, and appointing presbyter-bishops.

### **Saint Angela Merici, Virgin - 27<sup>th</sup> January**



Born on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1474, in Desenzano on the shore of Lake Garda in Lombardy, St Angela Merici was an Italian religious educator who had such a deep prayer life and relationship with the Lord that she had mystical encounters with God. When just ten years old she and her older sister were orphaned and moved to Salo to live with their uncle. They lived quiet, devout Christian lives. After her sister’s sudden early death, Angela dedicated herself to the Lord and service of the Church helping everyone to grow closer to the Lord. At the age of twenty, after the death of her uncle, Angela returned to Desenzano and, seeing the lack of education available for many young girls she opened her own home and began to teach them, by example and instruction in the sacramental life of the Church. She founded an institution of consecrated virgins who devoted their lives to the religious training of young girls. In 1535 Angela gathered twelve young women together and laid the foundation for the Order of the Ursulines. This was the first group of women religious to work outside the cloister and became the first teaching order of women in the Catholic Church. Angela died on January 27<sup>th</sup> 1540 and is buried in the Church of St Afra in Brescia. Before she died she assured her Sisters: ‘I shall continue to be more alive than I was in life and I shall see you better and shall love more the good deeds which I shall see you doing continually, and I shall be able to help you more.’ The Ursuline Religious Order was officially recognised by Pope Paul III in 1544 becoming a religious community of women with a teaching ministry. St. Angela Merici was beatified on April 30, 1768 by Pope Clement XIII and canonized May 24, 1807 by Pope Pius VII.

### **Saint Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Doctor – 28th January**

St. Thomas Aquinas is one of the most influential and holy saints the Catholic Church has ever produced. He is regarded as one of the greatest philosophers and theologians of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and his work is within the curriculum of seminaries, colleges and schools around the world.

He has been called one of the most profound teachers on Eucharistic doctrine, expounding the mystery of how the bread and wine become the actual Body and Blood of Christ, calling it the **Doctrine of Transubstantiation**. His writings are for all people both the scholar and the simple believer and, as such the Church gives him the titles “Angelic,” “Common” and “Universal Doctor of the Church.”

Thomas Aquinas was born about the year 1225 at the castle of his father, the Count of Aquino, in Rocca Secca near Naples, Italy. A precocious child, he amazed his teachers at the Monastery of Monte Cassino, where he received his early education, with one persistent question: “What is God?” It was a question upon which he would reflect all his life. When attending the University of Naples, he was attracted to the intellectual apostolate of the



Dominican Friars and joined the order. Outraged at his rejection of their own plans for him to become a prestigious abbot, and looking down on Dominicans as beggars, his aristocratic family kidnapped him on his way to Paris and imprisoned him at Rocca Secca. It took almost two years and the intercession of the Pope and the Emperor before his family finally gave up and allowed him to rejoin the Dominicans.

St. Albert the Great, became his mentor and taught him Aristotelian philosophy in Paris and Cologne. When Thomas was nicknamed the “Dumb Ox” by his classmates, most likely because of his bulky frame and quiet manner, Albert prophesied: “You call him a dumb ox, but I tell you this dumb ox will bellow so loudly that his bellowing will fill the world.”

Aquinas became master teacher attracting thousands of people to his public lectures, he compiled more than 20 volumes of work, was consulted by popes and a king (Louis IX), and showed that one could use pure reason, not faith, to defend theological tenets such as the existence of God. His greatest work, the ***Summa Theologica*** (Summary of Theology), which he began in 1265, is a comprehensive treatise on all the Christian mysteries.

Despite his reputation as a thinker, Thomas remained a humble, devout priest who resisted attempts to make him a bishop, fasted frequently, and spent whole nights in prayer. He told his intimate friend, St. Bonaventure, that it was while he leaned his head against the tabernacle and turned his mind in sorrow to the image of the crucified Christ, that he derived all his learning.

In December 1273 when Thomas was lost in prayer while living in the Dominican priory in Naples, a sacristan concealed himself to watch. He saw Thomas lifted into the air and heard Christ speak to him from the crucifix on the chapel wall, “Thomas, you have written well of me. What reward will you have?” “Lord, nothing but yourself,” he heard Thomas reply. A little while later, while saying Mass in that same chapel, Thomas had a profound revelation. He told his long time secretary that compared to this experience, “All that I have written seems like straw to me.” After that, he never wrote again, leaving his *Summa Theologica* unfinished. Thomas Aquinas died on 7th March 1274, and immediately Albert the Great, who was then in Cologne, broke down into tears He exclaimed to his community: “Brother Thomas Aquinas, my son in Christ, the light of the Church, is dead! God has revealed it to me.”

**Sunday of the Word of God – The Word is heard and responded to in many different ways.  
(Mark 4: 1 – 20)**

# Four Soils Parable

