

PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

SUNDAY APRIL 9	EASTER SUNDAY
SUNDAY APRIL 16	DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
FRIDAY APRIL 28	St. Louis Marie de Montfort

Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™

THE ANIMA CHRISTI

Although it is not commonly known, there are more ordained priests in the Church's calendar of saints than any other class of saint. Holiness is not limited to priests, by any means, but there is probably a reason for such uncommon priestly sanctity. Because of their sacramental ministry, priests remain close to the Divine Mysteries all their lives.

Among all the prayers that priests have composed throughout the centuries, one of these prayers stand out. The Spanish priest, St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), was founder of the Jesuit order and a man who spent his life teaching people the value of their souls. His spiritual treatise, *The Spiritual Exercises* is a common manual for retreats even to this day. Ignatius gave his religious order the sacred Name of Jesus because of his intense devotion to the Lord.

St. Ignatius' most famous prayer, the *Anima Christi*, is a marvelous spiritual reflection on the Passion of Christ. The title is Latin, translated as "Soul of Christ", which is the first line of the prayer.

ANIMA CHRISTI

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from Christ's side, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Within Thy wounds hide me.

Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.

From the malicious enemy defend me.

In the hour of my death call me.

And bid me come unto Thee.

That I may praise Thee with Thy saints

and with Thine angels.

Forever and ever. Amen.

Notice that the prayer touches on the entire sacred humanity of Jesus: His Body and Soul, as well as the Blood and water that flowed from His side. These elements symbolize the Eucharist and the whole sacramental life of the Church.

The *Anima Christi* is also a very personal prayer to Jesus that anyone can pray with heartfelt devotion. Together with St. Ignatius, we ask Him to save us from the power the evil one and to lead us through the problems of life to the Kingdom of God, where we hope to share eternity with Him. This prayer is short enough to be memorized. Let this be your challenge in the Easter Season!

→ MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

April 2023— We enter the month of April in the penitential garb of Lent, but we will exit the month in the glory of Easter. Let us make sure to adore Christ with our reverent participation at Mass this month and thank the Lord for the gifts of family and faith that He has given us so generously.

BIBLE BASICS



Luke 22:19 Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me."

Colossians 1:15-16 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and for him.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

The Easter Season is a time to focus the eyes of our hearts on the Resurrection and remind ourselves that Christ is the Lord of the living and the dead. I challenge you to attend the Holy Week liturgies and review the Rules for the Eucharistic Fast so that you are prepared spiritually to receive the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

- CA State Chaplain, Father John P. Grace, OSA



Rules for the Eucharistic Fast

The Church's rules for worthy reception of the Eucharist are commonly known as the "Eucharistic fast". There are two primary rules, which come directly from canon law:

- 1 One who is to receive the Most Holy Eucharist is to abstain from any food or drink, with the exception of water and medicine, for at least the period of one hour before Holy Communion. (Canon 919.1)
- 2 A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to celebrate Mass or receive the body of the Lord without previous sacramental confession unless there is a grave reason and there is no opportunity to confess; in this case the person is to remember the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition which includes the resolution of confessing as soon as possible. (Canon 916)

A few other technical matters related to receiving Holy Communion apply in unusual circumstances. These reasonable guidelines protect the Eucharist from abuse or help to accommodate unavoidable human situations:

- A person who has already received the Eucharist may receive a second time on the same day, but it must be within a Mass (Canon 917);
- Anyone excommunicated must not receive Communion until the penalty is lifted and until there is a definite reform of life (Canon 915);
- The elderly, the sick, and those who care for them may receive Communion if they have eaten something within the preceding hour (Canon 919.3). In such a case, the fasting obligation is reduced to one quarter of an hour (*Immensae Caritatis*, 1973).

— CATECHISM CONNECTION —



1343 It was above all on "the first day of the week," Sunday, the day of Jesus' resurrection, that the Christians met "to break bread." From that time on down to our own day the celebration of the Eucharist has been continued so that today we encounter it everywhere in the Church with the same fundamental structure. It remains the center of the Church's life.

Vatican Instruction Mortification aims at the liberation of man, who often finds himself, because of concupiscence, almost chained by his own senses. Through "corporal fasting" man regains strength, and the wound inflicted on the dignity of our nature by intemperance is cured by the medicine of a salutary abstinence. *Paenitemini* (1966).

CALENDAR OF FAITH | APRIL

APR 1 Sat	St. Francis of Paola, Hermit
APR 2 Sun	PALM SUNDAY
APR 4 Mon	St. Isidore of Seville, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
APR 5 Tue	St. Vincent Ferrer, Priest
APR 6 Wed	HOLY THURSDAY (Mass of the Lord's Supper)
APR 7 Thu	GOOD FRIDAY (Liturgy of the Passion)
APR 8 Fri	HOLY SATURDAY (am) / EASTER VIGIL (pm)
APR 9 Sat	EASTER SUNDAY
APR 16 Sun	DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
APR 21 Fri	St. Anselm, Bishop & Doctor of the Church
APR 25 Tue	St. Mark, Evangelist
APR 28 Fri	St. Louis Marie de Montfort, Priest and St. Peter Chanel, Priest and Martyr
APR 29 Sat	St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church
APR 30 Sun	St. Pius V, Pope

— THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS —



"The Eucharist is the sacrament of love: it signifies love, it produces love. The Eucharist is the consummation of the whole spiritual life."
~ St Thomas Aquinas

"When we work hard, we must eat well. What a joy, that you can receive Holy Communion often! It's our life and support in this life -- Receive Communion often, and Jesus will change you into himself." ~St. Peter Julian Eymard

"To speak of the Blessed Sacrament is to speak of what is most sacred. How often, when we are in a state of distress, those to whom we look for help leave us; or what is worse, add to our affliction by heaping fresh troubles upon us. He is ever there, waiting to help us." ~St. Mary Euphrasia

— FAITH IN ACTION —

— FEATURED PROGRAM —

SACRAMENTAL GIFTS

The Knights of Columbus provide support for families during the most important events in the life of the domestic church: the sacraments. In addition to regular Mass attendance, the most important participation in the spiritual life of the Church is through sacramental preparation programs which help us build a closer relationship with the parish community. Knights can play an integral role in these momentous faith events and the lives of families and the parish community through prayer, catechetical materials, and the presentation of symbolic gifts at ceremonies. Their support supplements parish faith formation programs but does not duplicate them.