

**Doctors of the Church:
St. Robert Bellarmine**

The term Doctor of the Church may be a hard concept to understand, and then reading from Doctors of the Church may be even more challenging! From the richness they have given to us, we encourage you to dive in! Sometimes, learning more about the specific saint can help us understand their writings (or get us interested enough to push through!) Here is a great resource:

The Doctors of the Church - Through dramatic reenactments, Dr. Matthew Bunson explores the lives of the time-honored Doctors of the Church and how they continue to proclaim the Gospel to the modern world. (Episode 8 and 9 are about St. Robert Bellarmine and are about 30 minutes each. Scan the QR Code or search "EWTN The Doctors of the Church."



**Corporal Works
of Mercy**

St. Philip Neri was known to live out the corporal Works of Mercy, but what are they? In the Gospels, Jesus provides us with a model of how to treat others. The Corporal Works of Mercy give us tangible ideas of how we can serve those around us. They are:

- Feed the Hungry
- Give Drink to the Thirsty
- Shelter the Homeless
- Visit the Sick
- Visit the Prisoners
- Bury the Dead
- Give Alms to the Poor

How can you give of yourself to others to spread the love of Jesus?

- Donate to a local food pantry
- Make blankets for the homeless this winter
- Give blood
- Visit a nursing home
- Provide a meal to someone in need
- Volunteer with a prison ministry
- Attend funerals of people in your parish
- Skip eating out or a week's worth of coffee orders and donate that money to a charity

**The Finding of the
True Cross**



The story of St. Helena and the finding of the True Cross is fascinating. If you don't know the story, listen to *The Saints* Podcast on St. Helena. And if you are looking for a book to read, try Louis de Wohl "The Living Wood".



Pentecost Novena

After the Ascension of Jesus, while the apostles waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit, they expectantly and fervently prayed. They were afraid of what might happen to them but instead of cowering in fear, they gathered in prayer. These nine days of intense prayer is now known as the "original" novena. (Novena comes from the Latin word "novem" which means "nine"). When the Holy Spirit descended upon them at Pentecost they were emboldened to preach the Gospel and be witnesses to the faith. We encourage you to spend nine days anticipating the coming of the Holy Spirit this year. While there is no set Pentecost Novena and any prayers can be said, we recommend using this prayer:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth. Let us pray.

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pray More Novenas!

Now that you know where novenas come from, commit to praying more novenas this next year! Your patron saint, favorite feast day, parish feast day, anyone you like! Go to PrayMoreNovenas.com and find the right one to sign up and they'll send it to you on the right day, it's all free!

Restore the Roots

Cultivating Your Domestic Church A Liturgical Living Initiative of St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral, La Crosse, WI Vol. 3 No. 12

May

3 Finding of the True Cross



St. Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, discovered the cross used to crucify Jesus on September 14, 326 AD, in Jerusalem. Make cross-shaped pancakes this morning, or shape some biscuits or rolls into crosses to have with dinner! See page 4 for some further reading or listening.

13 St. Robert Bellarmine



Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621) was ordained in 1570, made a cardinal in 1598, canonized in 1930, and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1931. He devoted his life to studying Church History, the Fathers of the Church, and Scripture to systemize Church Doctrine and refute attacks by Protestant Reformers. He prepared two catechisms, and is best known for his three-volume work, *Disputations on the Controversies of the Christian Faith*. St. Robert Bellarmine's sermons and writings help us understand that our faith is strengthened by Church doctrine, even as the primary source remains Jesus Christ, who is still alive and active in the Church today. St. Robert Bellarmine is the patron saint of catechists and catechumens. EWTN's *The Doctors of the Church* has two episodes, about 30 minutes each, on St. Robert Bellarmine. See page 3 for more information!

14 The Ascension



Forty days after Easter, we celebrate Christ ascending into Heaven. Take a hike up a hill, eat some cloudlike treats (souffle or meringue) or go cloud gazing today!

15 St. Isidore the Farmer



He is the patron saint of farmers, peasants, day laborers, agricultural workers, and rural communities. *Bring your garden crosses to Mass on the 16/17 weekend for a blessing at the end of Mass. You can purchase one or have some fun and make your own! Or do the at home blessing on page 3.*

24 Pentecost



Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles. Start the novena on page 4 on May 15!

26 St. Philip Neri



St. Philip Neri, (1515-1595) was an Italian priest and founder of the Congregation of the Oratory, an order of secular clergy dedicated to charitable works and pastoral care. He was an exceptional spiritual director and was known as the "Apostle of Rome." He challenged the apathy of the clergy at the time of the Counter Reformation and rekindled spiritual life in the City. He was well known for his joyful spirit, humility and sense of humor. He was devoted to serving the poor and engaging in works of mercy. His body is buried at the Chiesa Nuova di Santa Maria in Vallicella in Rome and remains incorrupt. He is the patron saint of joy, humor, laughter, the US Special Forces, teachers and spiritual directors. See page 4 for ways to do works of mercy today.

✠ Fourth Council of Constantinople ✠

The Fourth Council of Constantinople marks the beginning of the divide between the Orthodox and Catholic Church. Some of the disputes were theological, although the primary dispute was over who had rightful claim to the patriarchate of Constantinople. A scandal broke out in the Church after Patriarch Ignatius was deposed, and a priest named Photius was appointed by Emperor Michael III and Caesar Bardas. He convened his own council in 867 about papal authority and a theological point called the filioque controversy (more on that in the future), during which he 'excommunicated' Pope Nicholas I. When the Emperor died, Ignatius was restored to the patriarchate, and Michael's successor Basil I asked Pope Nicholas to call a Council to decide whether the priests Photius ordained were done so validly. The next pope, Hadrian II, called the Council, which met at the Hagia Sophia at the end of 869 and the beginning of 870. After the proceedings, 27 canons were promulgated affirming the previous seven Ecumenical Councils, declaring on a few practical and theological matters of the day, condemning Photius and declaring his ordinations to be invalid.

Although ambitious for status, Photius was a respected, ascetical man with a keen intellect and capacity for teaching. When exiled, he bore it patiently, and when opposed, he acted courageously. Thus, he had many followers. After Ignatius died in 877, Ignatius was rightfully named Patriarch of Constantinople, and Pope John VIII restored him to communion. Photius could have become a great saint and doctor of the Catholic Church were it not for his hatred of Rome. He called another council in 879, condemning the decrees of the one held ten years prior and thus breaking union again with Rome. Because of his popularity, this council was much better attended than the one called by Hadrian II (with 400 compared to 100 bishops present, including Roman representatives). The Orthodox recognize the 879 Photian Council as the Fourth Council of Constantinople, venerate Photius as a saint, and argue that Pope John VIII gave approval to the 879 Council. The Catholic

Church, however, recognizes the Council of 869. Exacerbating the political and ecclesiological tensions, the theological question of the filioque was taken up as the token conflict. The Orthodox accuse Rome of making the Son rather than the Father the origin of the Holy Spirit. Rome, however, agrees that that Father is first origin and is okay with the language, "the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son," while saying that the language, "proceeds from the Father and the Son" highlights their consubstantial communion.

What can the Fourth Council of Constantinople teach us? We see on display the fragility of Church unity. "I pray that they may be one," Jesus says to the Father, "as you and I are one." Our unity is found in Christ, who founded his Church on the rock of Peter. In humility and obedience to Christ, we stay close to Peter, alive and active in Rome in the person of Leo XIV.



⚠ Indulgence Alerts! ⚠

This month the Church brings the reality of the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives to the forefront of our minds. Let's focus on some beautiful prayers to the Holy Spirit with indulgences attached.

A plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful who, recite the hymn "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest" on the feast of Pentecost.

Recited devoutly any other time, it is a partial indulgence

A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who,
1) at the beginning and the end of the day,
2) in starting and completing their work, or,
3) before and after meals,

devoutly offer some legitimately approved prayer of supplication and act of thanksgiving like,
Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.

May Crowning

What is a May Crowning?

In the month of May, Catholics take the time to honor Mary as the Mother of God and the Queen of Heaven. Commonly, parishes will crown a statue of Mary during Mass. This crown is made up of flowers - fresh or fake. It is also common for a parish to have a special procession with the statue of Mary and to include Marian prayers and hymns. The crowning does not have to take place on a certain date.

How can I celebrate the May Crowning in my own home?

- Get a statue of Mary (if you already have one inside, place it somewhere special for this month)
- Make a crown for the statue
- Put flowers around the statue
- Sing a Marian hymn during the crowning
 - Pick any favorite hymn or try the one listed here! (Listen to it on YouTube to hear the tune.)



*"Labor with your hands,
but lift your heart to heaven."
-St. Isidore the Farmer*

Garden or Field Blessing For At Home!

If your parish does not do a garden cross blessing, bless your whole garden at home! Gather your family around your field or garden to bless it. Use this rite to express your gratefulness of the blessings of God, who created the universe out of His inexpressible love and entrusted its care to human labor as the way of providing for common human needs.

(Scan the QR code or search for the Field and Garden blessing from the Diocese of Sacramento.)



Bring Flowers of the Rarest

Bring flow'rs of the fairest,
Bring flow'rs of the rarest,
From garden and woodland
And hillside and vale;
Our full hearts are swelling,
Our Glad voices telling
The praise of the loveliest
Rose of the vale.

Refrain:

O Mary! we crown thee with blossoms
today,
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May,
O Mary! we crown thee with blossoms
today,
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May.

Our voices ascending,
In harmony blending,
Oh! Thus may our hearts turn
Dear Mother, to thee;
Oh! Thus shall we prove thee
How truly we love thee,
How dark without Mary
Life's journey would be.

Refrain

O Virgin most tender,
Our homage we render,
Thy love and protection,
Sweet Mother, to win;
In danger defend us,
In sorrow befriend us,
And shield our hearts
From contagion and sin.

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