

February Saints



Stained glass window depicting Our Lady of Lourdes appearing to St. Bernadette.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
				Presentation of the Lord	St. Blaise	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time	St. Paul Miki & Companions				St. Scholastica	Our Lady of Lourdes
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time		Ss. Cyril & Methodius				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time		St. Peter Damian	The Chair of Peter	St. Polycarp		
26	27	28				
Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time			March 1 is Ash Wednesday			

Living with the Saints

2 The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord falls on the fortieth day after Christmas, since it recalls an ancient Jewish custom of presenting a first-born male to the Lord in the Temple forty days after his birth. Two elderly people, Simeon and Anna, were present in the Temple and spoke of Jesus as the Redeemer. Simeon called him “a light to the nations,” so the liturgical celebration involves a blessing of candles and a procession with candles. Bring your candles to church today and have them blessed. Read the beautiful account of this day found in Luke 2:22-38.

3 St. Blaise (†316) is a popular saint down to this day despite the fact that we know little about him. He is best known today for the Blessing of Throats that takes place at Mass. It's a good day to pray for teachers, singers and others who rely on their voices!

6 St. Paul Miki (1562-97) and his 25 companions are Japanese saints crucified in Nagasaki on February 5, 1587. As they hung on their crosses, they sang together an ancient prayer of praise called the *Te Deum*. Google that prayer and say it today.

10 Imagine having two saints in the family! St. Scholastica (c. 480-547) is the sister of another saint—Benedict of Nursia (whose feast we celebrate on July 11). They are the founders of the Benedictine Order. Pray for the people in

your family today, asking God to make them holy.

11 On this day 99 years ago, while gathering flowers with her sister and a friend, Bernadette Soubirous saw a vision of the Blessed Mother near Lourdes, France. Today there is a shrine at Lourdes visited by people from throughout the world, often seeking healing. Many parishes have outdoor shrines to Our Lady of Lourdes, set in a garden in a way similar to the way she appeared to St. Bernadette. Pray the rosary today. If you don't remember how, look online for help.

14 While most of the world celebrates romantic love on St. Valentine's Day, the Church celebrates two great Slavic saints, Ss. Cyril (826-69) and Methodius (815-85). They were brothers who evangelized the Slavic regions and their influence remains to this day. They invented an alphabet that formed the basis for Cyrillic—an alphabet still in use in parts of Eastern Europe. They wrote the first code of law for the region and had many more accomplishments. They are especially revered by the Eastern Churches. Pray for the people of Eastern Europe today.

21 St. Peter Damian (1007-1072) had many talents. As a Cardinal of the Church, he provided valuable service to many popes. He was generous, not only donating to the poor but dining with them at his own table. He was a great teacher and preacher and for this he was

given the title of Doctor of the Church. Today, pray for the College of Cardinals who assist the pope in leading the Church and will one day elect his successor.

22 Today's feast bears the unusual name, the Chair of Peter. The feast has been celebrated by the Church since at least the middle of the fourth century. Its origins actually pre-date Christianity. In Roman times, they commemorated the dead at the end of each year. A chair was left empty to commemorate certain people. This feast replicates that, remembering Peter through the use of this commemorative chair. The Latin word for chair is *cathedra* which gives name to *Cathedral* as the place housing the chair of a Bishop. This feast also celebrates the unity in the Church through the College of Bishops. Today is a good day to pray for the pope and bishops.

23 St. Polycarp (69-155) was a disciple of Saint John himself. Because he lived at a time when the Apostles themselves were being martyred, he worked to make sure that the true message of Jesus was not changed by the feelings of the times. He was a stalwart teacher and was martyred for the faith. St. Polycarp is considered the first martyr to have a “cultic following,” which means that those who followed him continued to venerate him long after his martyrdom.