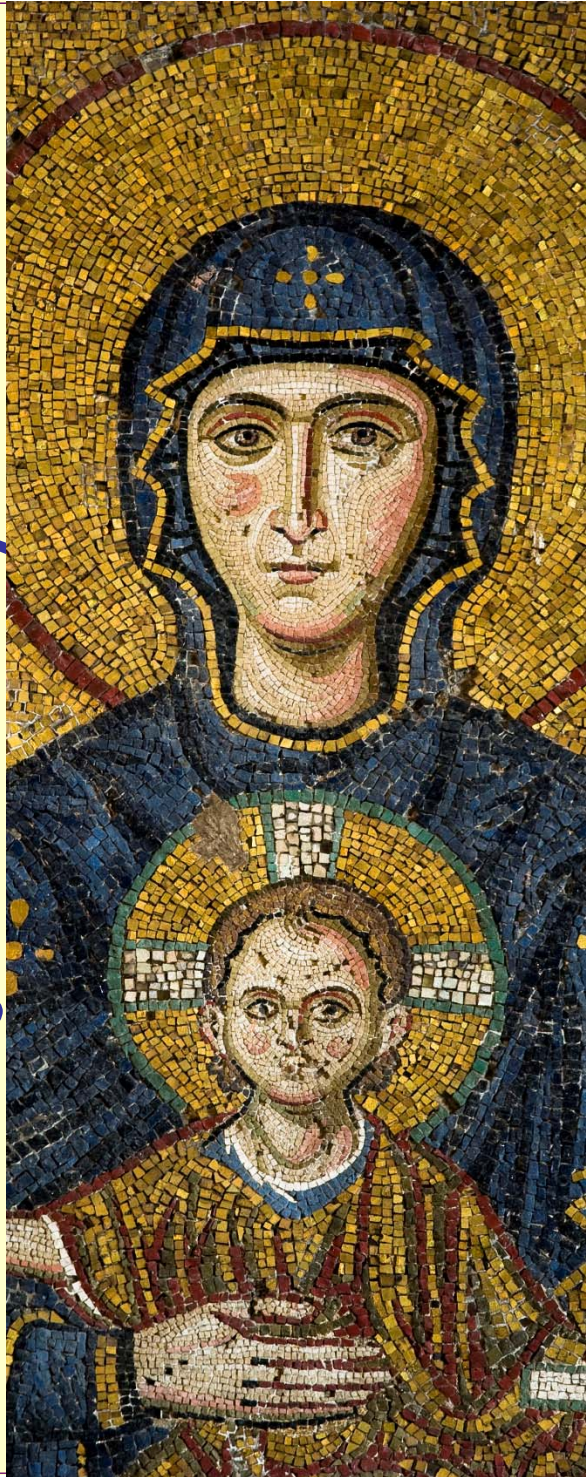


January Saints



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Mary, Mother of God	2 Ss. Basil & Gregory	3	4 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	5 St. John Neumann	6 St. André Bessette	7
8 Epiphany of the Lord	9 Baptism of the Lord	10	11	12	13	14
15 Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	16	17 St. Anthony the Abbot	18	19	20	21 St. Agnes
22 Third Sunday in Ordinary Time	23 National Day of Prayer for Legal Protec- tion of Un- born Children	24 St. Francis de Sales	25 Conversion of St. Paul	26 Ss. Timothy & Titus	27	28 St. Thomas Aquinas
29 Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time	30	31 St. John Bosco				

Living with the Saints

1 January 1 is a busy day in the Church and the world! In addition to beginning a new civic year, January 1 concludes the Octave of Christmas. Both Easter & Christmas include an octave (meaning “eight”), marking the eighth day following the feast, extending the intensity of the celebration for a week. January 1 also is the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. This is the oldest of all the Marian feasts and originally celebrated Mary as *Theotokos*, Greek for “the Bearer of God.” Today is a good day to give thanks for the blessings of 2016 and to ask God’s blessing for all of 2017.

2 Saints Basil the Great (†379) and Gregory Nazianzen (†389 or 390) were friends from Cappadocia (current day Turkey). Both were great scholars who eventually became bishops and were defenders of the faith. Pray the Nicene Creed today and reflect upon the faith of the Church.

4 & 5 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821) and St. John Neumann (1811-60) are two American saints who were instrumental in the development of education in the USA. Pray for students and teacher on these days.

6 St. André Bessette (1845-1937) was a simple man who was a porter—his job was to greet visitors. He had an intense devotion to St. Joseph and reminded others (especially the sick) to “go to St. Joseph.” He is especially connected with intercession for the sick. Today is a good day to pray for the sick through the intercession of both St. André and St. Joseph.

9 The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord marks the end of the Christmas season. This serves as a kind of threshold between the celebration of the Incarnation of the Lord as a baby and Jesus as an adult, beginning his public ministry. Do you know on what day you were baptized? If not, this is a good day to commemorate it by lighting a candle (your baptismal candle, if available) and thanking God for the Church and the grace of baptism.

17 St. Anthony the Abbot (†356) knew that pride was a serious sin so he always sought to live humbly and encouraged others to do the same. Much like St. Francis of Assisi, he sold all of his possession and relied on God to take care of his daily needs. He is considered the “patriarch of monks,” making this a good day to pray for our brothers and sisters who are in consecrated life.

21 St. Agnes (291-304) lived a short life but was a powerful witness and, eventually, martyr. Since her name is close to the Latin word for lamb (*agnus*) it is traditional that two lambs are presented to the pope on this feast day. From their wool a garment for archbishops called the *pallium* is made. Remember the pope and all bishops in your prayers today.

23 Each year a National Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children is commemorated throughout the USA. Pray for an end to abortion and all violations against the sacredness of life.

24 St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622) encouraged every-day people to live a life of prayer and action. He criticized those who prayed like angels and lived evil lives. Examine your conscience today. Do your daily actions and decisions flow from prayer and faith?

25 One of the most famous New Testament stories is about the Conversion of St. Paul

(which is the name of today’s feast). Read chapter 9 of the Acts of the Apostles today.

26 Ss. Timothy and Titus († c. 97) were companions of St. Paul. He trusted each to be his representative in some of the local communities, such as Corinth and Ephesus. Do you share the Good News?

28 St. Thomas Aquinas (1226-74) is the great theologian of the Catholic Church. While he was very smart, his classmates thought he was rather dumb because he rarely spoke. In the end, he became the most influential philosopher and theologian of the Roman Catholic Church. Today and tomorrow pray a prayer that he wrote for students (below).

31 St. John Bosco (1815-88) was a dreamer. Starting at the age of nine he had vivid dreams that led him throughout his life. He spent much of his time working with neglected children and is one of the patron saints of school children and young people.

A Student’s Prayer by St. Thomas Aquinas

Come, Holy Spirit, Divine Creator, true source of light and fountain of wisdom! Pour forth your brilliance upon my dense intellect, dissipate the darkness which covers me, that of sin and of ignorance. Grant me a penetrating mind to understand, a retentive memory, method and ease in learning, the lucidity to comprehend, and abundant grace in expressing myself. Guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress, and bring it to successful completion. This I ask through Jesus Christ, true God and true man, living and reigning with You and the Father, forever and ever. Amen.