

Faith Loops

This month we resumed our presentation of Faith Loops, PowerPoint shows with images and information that are intended to **inform** us of Church teachings and **form** us in our Catholic faith. To learn more about your faith while waiting for Mass to begin, come a few minutes early. Each Faith Loop takes 12 – 15 minutes to view.



The more we know and understand about our faith, the more confident we are in passing it onto others, especially our children.

Saint of the Month

St. Vincent de Paul



Vincent de Paul was born to a peasant family in France in 1581. While he enjoyed reading and writing, Vincent spent much of his time herding the family's livestock. At the age of 15, his father sent him to the seminary, where he was trained for the priesthood. As a young priest, Vincent was captured by North African pirates who sold him into slavery. For two years, he worked hard for his masters. After converting his last master to Christianity, he was set free.

St. Vincent de Paul

Upon returning to Paris, Vincent became a village pastor as well as a tutor for a rich, influential family. However, he then had a change of heart. Vincent had become increasingly aware of poverty, and he felt God was calling him to be a true friend to the poor and the needy. He left the palace and went to work with the poor.

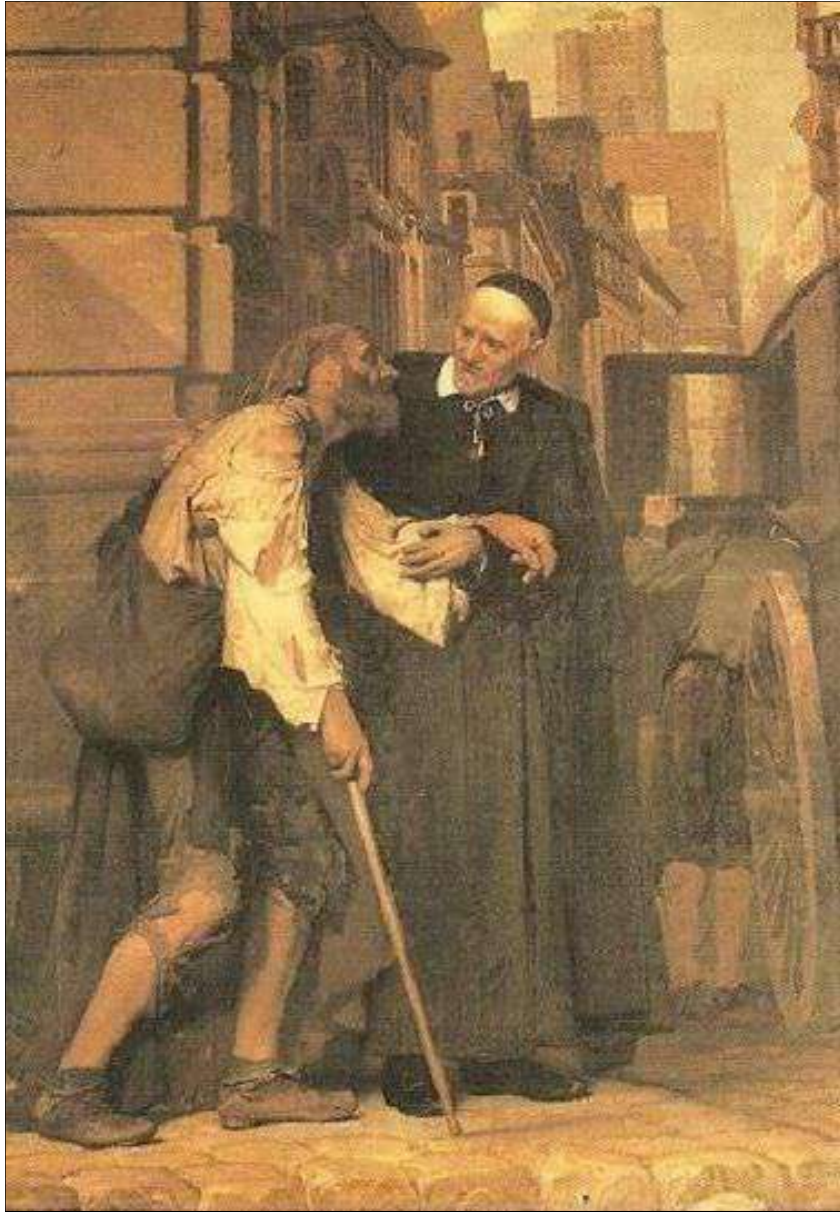
St. Vincent de Paul was a priest who was most remembered for his kindness. Poor children were always hanging on to his coattails. To them, he gave food, clothing, toys and all the love that was in his heart.



St. Vincent de Paul

'Give' was the word that described his daily life. He worked hard to earn money and then gave it all away to the poor. To help his work with the poor, Vincent gathered a group of men and women who were dedicated to God. They established orphanages, hospitals, and educational institutions. He sent these missionaries throughout Europe. In North Africa, they ransomed 1200 slaves. Today, these men (the Vincentians) and women (Daughters of Charity) continue the work Vincent started.





St. Vincent de Paul

Throughout his life, while asserting a preferential option for the poor, Vincent remained a very humble man. Apparently, the queen of France came to visit him when he was on his death bed. The year was 1660. She said to him that God must be very pleased

with him. To her surprise, Vincent shook his head. He replied, “I should have done more.”

St. Vincent de Paul

During his life, Vincent had organized groups of people to serve the needs of the poor and imprisoned. Today there are many chapters of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, run by people who are dedicated to serving the poor.

In light of these acts of service, St. Vincent de Paul – depicted in this stained glass window – is the patron saint of charitable societies, prisoners, volunteers, and hospital workers. His feast day is September 27.



The First Commandment

*I am the Lord your God.
You shall not have strange gods before me.*

The first commandment calls us to place God first and foremost in our lives. This is our primary moral duty. In response, we are to love, trust, and believe in God above all else.

Gratitude for God is evidenced whenever we adore God, pray to Him, and worship Him ... and Him alone.



The First Commandment

*I am the Lord your God.
You shall not have strange gods before me.*

Jesus reiterated this in the New Law, saying, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.

This is the greatest and first commandment” (Luke 10: 27). We demonstrate this love through acts of faith, hope, and charity.



The First Commandment

*I am the Lord your God.
You shall not have strange gods before me.*

On Mount Sinai, God instructed Moses: “You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth” (Exodus 20: 3 – 4). And then, Moses found the people worshipping a golden calf!

In today’s world, we worship our own idols when we place more importance on other things, such as money, work, material possessions, recreation, and technology, than on our faith in God.



The First Commandment

I am the Lord your God. No strange gods before me.

Superstition is an offence against the first commandment. It is defined as attributing to objects, such as charms and amulets, or to people or practices, a power that belongs to God alone.



Sacrilege is the violation, desecration, or profanation of anything sacred or held sacred. It includes irreverence towards sacred things such as the sacraments or sacred objects.



Clergy Vestments – the Cincture

The priest and deacon wear a rope or cord with tassled or knotted ends. It is known as the **cincture**. The cincture is tied around their waist. It symbolizes their commitment to the virtue of chastity.

The alb and cincture are worn by the Master of Ceremonies and the altar servers as well. However, some vestments are worn only by ordained ministers. These ministers are the men who have received the Sacrament of Holy Orders: deacons, priests, bishops.

The Role of the Deacon

Having received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, deacons are ordained ministers. Unlike a priest, a deacon does not celebrate Mass, nor does he hear confessions. The word 'deacon' comes from a Greek word that means 'servant'. Their vestments reflect their servant role.

At liturgies, the deacon has specific duties. If the deacon is present, he will always proclaim the gospel. He will often prepare and present the homily, sharing this task with the parish priest.



The Role of the Deacon

The deacon also assists the priest at the altar, particularly at the Preparation of the Gifts and, after communion, with the purification of the vessels.

Before we receive communion, he will invite us to share the Sign of Peace. At the end of Mass, the deacon dismisses us with words like 'Go in peace, glorifying the Lord with your life.'

Deacons also have the authority to baptize and to preside at marriages.



Feast of the Archangels



The three saints featured in this icon do not have physical bodies. They never need to eat or sleep ... never have.

You may have already concluded that these three saints are not human ... never were. They were created by God to protect His people ... to protect us. They are spiritual beings which we call angels.

Feast of the Archangels

In fact, these saints are called 'archangels' because they are very powerful angels, leaders amongst angels. They are the only angels that are named in the bible: St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael.



Gabriel was the angel that appeared to Mary and later to Joseph in a dream. He announced that she would give birth to the Son of God.

Feast of the Archangels

As for St. Michael, depicted here, when some of the heavenly angels turned against God, there was a great battle and he led the army of good angels in chasing Satan and the bad angels out. Michael means 'Who is like the Lord'.

Finally, in the Book of Tobit, we read about Raphael healing Tobit of his illness. Raphael means 'God has healed'.



Feast of the Archangels

The feast of the Archangels reminds us that, on this journey through life, we are vulnerable to temptation and to hurts.

In His infinite wisdom, God knows that we will need help

in staying on the path of holiness.



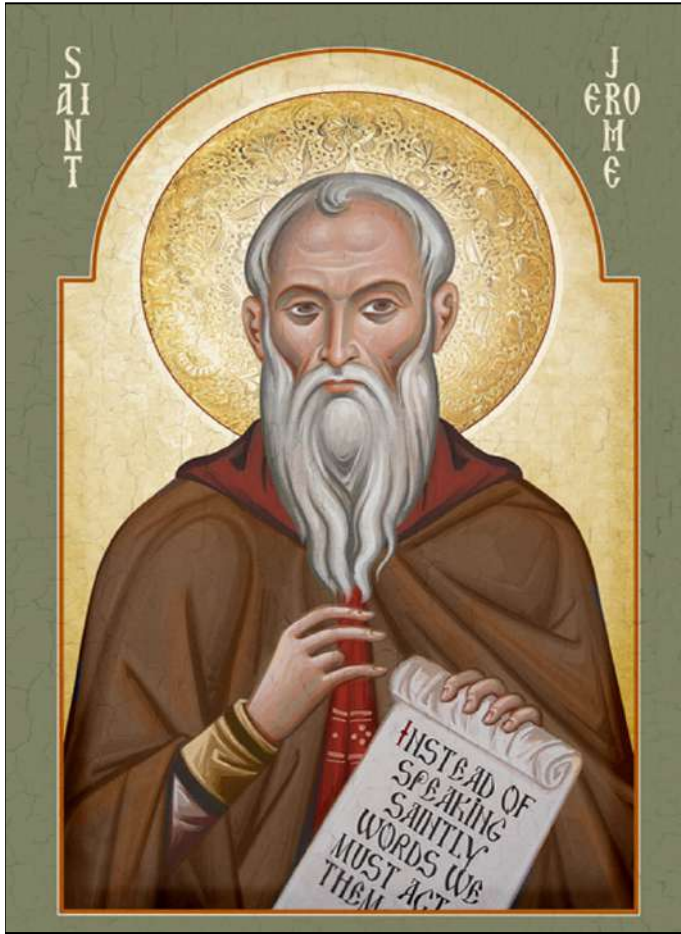
Every year on September 29 we remember all three of these archangels. We can pray to St. Michael at any time, particularly when we need protection from temptation or anything that is evil. The prayer goes like this:

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

**ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL,
DEFEND US IN BATTLE.**

**BE OUR SAFEGUARD AGAINST
THE WICKEDNESS AND SNARES OF THE DEVIL.
MAY GOD REBUKE HIM, WE HUMBLY PRAY.**

**AND DO THOU,
O PRINCE OF THE HEAVENLY HOSTS,
BY THE POWER OF GOD,
CAST INTO HELL SATAN AND ALL EVIL SPIRITS
THAT PROWL ABOUT THE WORLD
SEEKING THE RUIN OF SOULS. AMEN.**



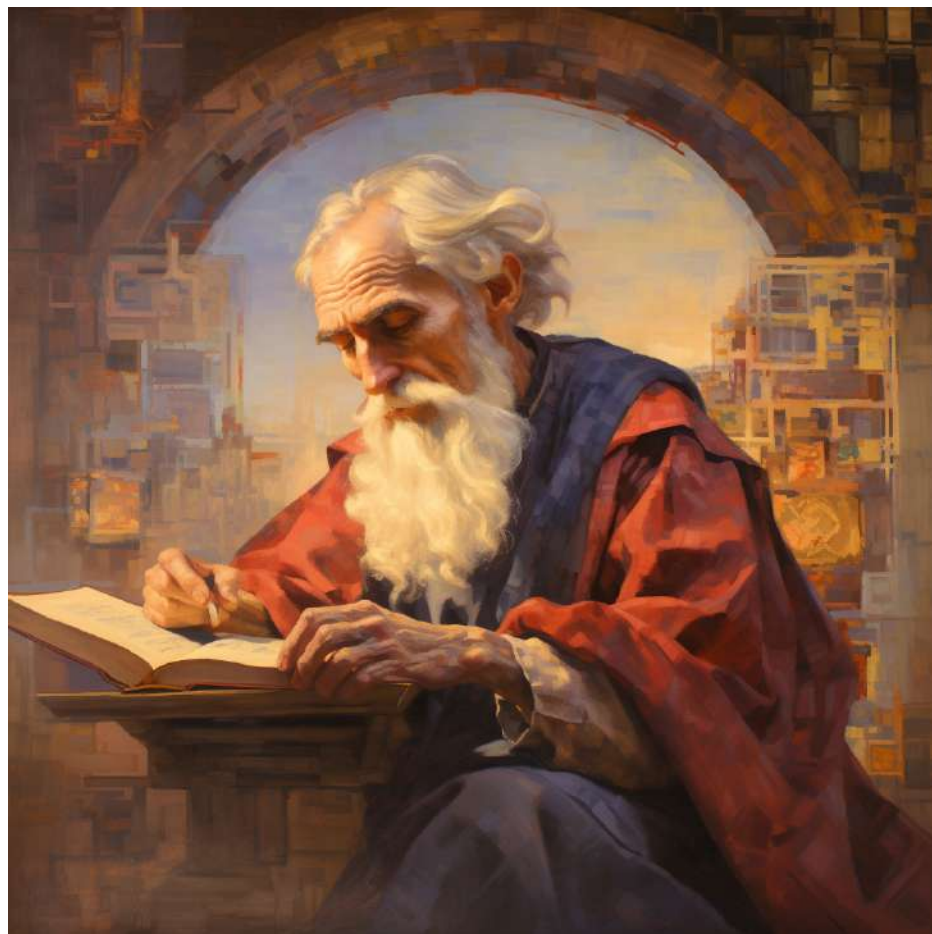
St. Jerome

We remember another important saint this week. 1700 years ago, St. Jerome was born into a rich family that did not believe in God. He went to school in Rome, where he studied the Latin and Greek languages. Eventually, Jerome came to believe in Christ and, at

the age of 35, became a priest. Because he was so gifted with learning languages, he was able to translate the Bible, which was written in Greek, into the language that most people spoke at the time, which was Latin. His translations are still in use today.

St. Jerome

St. Jerome wrote many books, especially about Holy Scripture – about the Bible. He is known as a Doctor of the Church, which simply means he was a great teacher of the faith and wrote about it. He is also the patron saint of archaeologists, librarians, schoolchildren, and those who study the Bible. His feast day is September 30. We can pray to St. Jerome, especially if we work in a library or study the Bible.

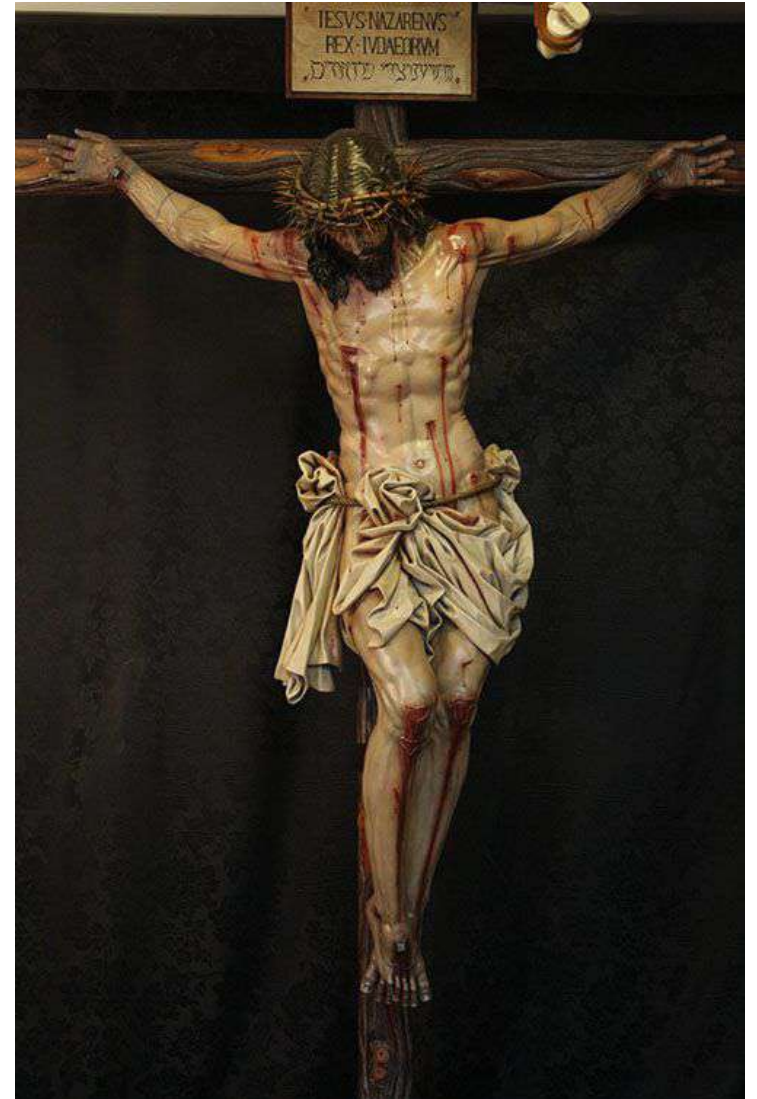


From the Suggestion Box ...

Who was the first person to make a crucifix, and when did they make it?

Let's first distinguish a simple cross from a crucifix. A crucifix has the corpus – the body – of Jesus on the cross. A simple cross does not.

Crucifixes are used during religious celebrations in Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, and some Orthodox churches.

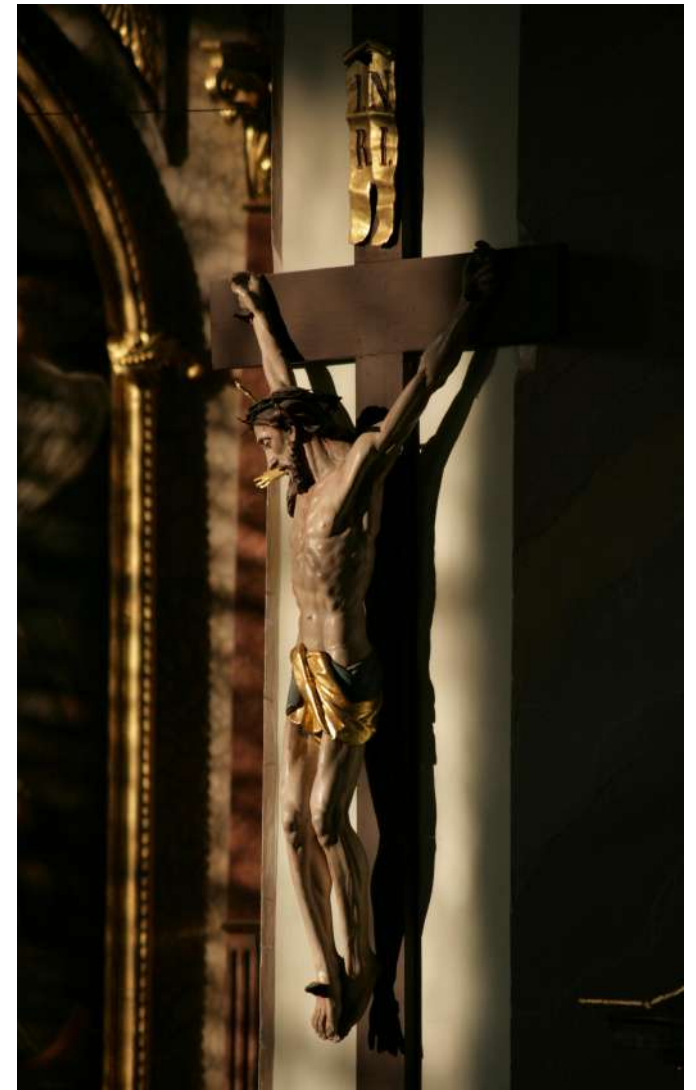


From the Suggestion Box ... the Crucifix

There is no record of who first created a crucifix.

Beginning in the 6th century, artists began creating representations of the Crucifixion of Christ.

During the Middle Ages, it became the custom for monks and priests, and eventually laypeople to hang a crucifix on their walls. Most towns erected a large crucifix as a monument or shrine at the entrance to the town.



From the Suggestion Box ... **the Crucifix**

In his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul wrote, “But we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Cor. 1:23).



Today the Roman Rite requires that “either on the altar or near it, there is to be a cross, with the figure of Christ

crucified upon it, a cross clearly visible to the assembled people ... so as to call to mind for the faithful the saving Passion of the Lord.” (GIRM #308)

Prayer Before Mass

Dear God, help me to be open to all that you want to give me at Mass today.

My heart is open. I come in hope.

I come empty and unsure and troubled.

I come in need to be loved by you,
united with this faith community,
strengthened by your word,
and nourished by the Bread of Life.

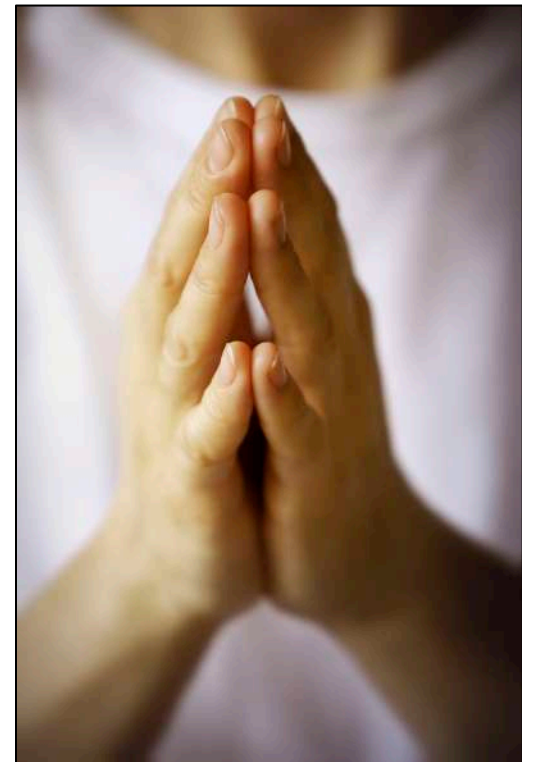
Cleanse me. Refresh me.

Strengthen me for the journey ahead.

Lead me to heaven.

Thank you, God, for this time together.

Thank you, God, for everything. Amen.



Questions???

Do you have a question about the Catholic faith or about the celebration of the Mass? If so, write it on a piece of paper and drop it into the marked shoebox on the table at the back of the church. We will try to answer it in a Faith Loop at a later date.

Thank you.

