



St Peter's Church, Surry Hills

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Most Reverend Danny J Meagher: Bishop in Residence, Episcopal Vicar for the Northern Region

Fr. John A Macdonald: Administrator

Fr. Nicola Falzun OP: Priest in Residence for the *Missio ad gentes* of the Neocatechumenal Way

Feast Days for the third week in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Tues 24 Jan Saint Francis de Sales, bishop, doctor

Wed 25 Jan The Conversion of Saint Paul, apostle

Sat 28 Jan Saint Thomas Aquinas, priest, doctor

For the remaining Sunday in January, i.e. 29 Jan: there will be ONLY ONE Mass at St Peter's at 10:00am

We Pray For:

Our sick and injured: Rose Ly-Schmitz, Grace Moon, Sophie Marden, Josephine Finneran, Anna Seow, Ricardo Francisco, Catherine Murphy, Adi Soediarto, Gerry Cassar, Makram Nammour, Camilla Pascoe, Ana Teresa Rodrigues, Mafalda Triolo, Aimi McEwen, Louise McCann, Marija Barclay, Danny Southee.

Our deceased:

Maria Helena Trujillo, Joachim Kerowa, Newton McMahon, Henrietta Pham, Frederick, Edward & Margaret M Hailwood & Margaret D Hailwood.

Our house bound elderly: Bernadette Hailwood, Robert Pearce, Joyce Regoski, June Holt, Shirley Kennedy, Anna Maria, Patricia Wells.

Partaking in the Eucharist commits us to others, especially the poor, teaching us to pass from the flesh of Christ to the flesh of our brothers and sisters, in whom he waits to be recognised, served, honoured and loved by us.

*Pope Francis
Catechesis on the Mass 2018*

Saint Francis de Sales (Feast day 24 Jan)

Francis was destined by his father to be a lawyer so that the young man could eventually take his elder's place as a senator from the province of Savoy in France. For this reason Francis was sent to Padua to study law. After receiving his doctorate, he returned home and, in due time, told his parents he wished to enter the priesthood. His father strongly opposed Francis in this, and only after much patient persuasiveness on the part of the gentle Francis did his father finally consent. Francis was ordained and elected provost of the Diocese of Geneva, then a centre for the Calvinists. Francis set out to convert them, especially in the district of Chablais. By preaching and distributing the little pamphlets he wrote to explain true Catholic doctrine, he had remarkable success.

At 35, he became bishop of Geneva. While administering his diocese he continued to preach, hear confessions, and catechize the children. His gentle character was a great asset in winning souls. He practised his own axiom, **“A spoonful of honey attracts more flies than a barrelful of vinegar.”**

Besides his two well-known books, the *Introduction to the Devout Life* and *A Treatise on the Love of God*, he wrote many pamphlets and carried on a vast correspondence. For his writings, he has been named patron of the Catholic Press. His writings, filled with his characteristic gentle spirit, are addressed to lay people. He wants to make them understand that they too are called to be saints. As he wrote in *The Introduction to the Devout Life*: “It is an error, or rather a heresy, to say devotion is incompatible with the life of a soldier, a tradesman, a prince, or a married woman.... It has happened that many have lost perfection in the desert who had preserved it in the world.”



Nothing is so strong as gentleness, nothing so gentle as real strength

Saint Frances de Sales

In spite of his busy and comparatively short life, he had time to collaborate with another saint, Jane Frances de Chantal, in the work of establishing the Sisters of the Visitation. These women were to practise the virtues exemplified in Mary’s visit to Elizabeth: humility, piety, and mutual charity. They at first engaged to a limited degree in works of mercy for the poor and the sick. Today, while some communities conduct schools, others live a strictly contemplative life.

Reflection

Francis de Sales took seriously the words of Christ, “Learn of me for I am meek and humble of heart.” As he said himself, it took him 20 years to conquer his quick temper, but no one ever suspected he had such a problem, so overflowing with good nature and kindness was his usual manner of acting. His perennial meekness and sunny disposition won for him the title of “Gentleman Saint.”

The Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle, (Feast day 25 Jan), Loyola Press

St. Paul the Apostle was the greatest of the early Christian missionaries. He first appears in the Acts of the Apostles under the name of Saul. Saul was raised in the Jewish faith as a Pharisee trained in the strict observance of God's Law. He believed the Law should be obeyed by himself and all Jews. Saul was upset by the early Christian Church, believing that the early Christians had broken away from their Jewish traditions. He actively persecuted the Church in Jerusalem. As the first Christian martyr Stephen was being stoned to death, Saul watched the cloaks of the persecutors (Acts 7:58).

Paul then travelled to Damascus to further persecute early Christians. On the road to Damascus Saul had an encounter with the Risen Jesus Christ (Acts of the Apostles 9:1–19, Galatians 1: 13–14). Jesus asked, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Paul replied, "Who are you, sir?" Jesus responded, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9: 4 – 5). Jesus then sent Saul into Damascus to wait for further instructions. Saul was shaken and blinded by the experience. When a Christian named Ananias came and baptized Saul, his blindness went away. As a result of this encounter Saul became a follower of Christ.

Saul, whose name now became Paul, went to Jerusalem to consult with Peter (Galatians 1: 18). After his first missionary journeys, Paul was called by Jesus to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles. He spent the rest of his life journeying on his missions, establishing local churches, and writing to them when he heard of their accomplishments and failures. Paul's letters are the earliest records of the life and history of the early Church. As inspired by the Holy Spirit, Paul's letters are part of the Canon of the New Testament. As a record of the happenings in the early Church they are in invaluable record of the expansion of the Christianity.

St. Paul's Writings

All together, there are 13 epistles that bear Paul's name as the author. However, scholars do not agree that he wrote them all. Some scholars assert that Paul himself was the author of first and second Thessalonians, Galatians, Philippians, first and second Corinthians, Romans, and Philemon; but that the epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Titus, and first and second Timothy which bear Paul's name were written after his death. They claim that the writers of these letters were disciples of Paul who wanted to continue his teaching. Whoever the authors of these epistles were, these writings have been accepted into the New Testament as inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Centrality of Jesus Christ

The most profound and moving day in Paul's life was when he met the risen Jesus Christ. Paul was well respected by the Jewish community and his peers. But he gave it all up for Christ.

"More than that, I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord." (Philippians 3:8) Jesus Christ, Paul realized, was sent by the Father to bring salvation for all. Paul taught that we are united with Christ in faith and Baptism; "We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life." (Romans 6:4)

On the personal level, individual Christians recognize that when they are united with and justified by Christ, they receive the grace needed to overcome sin and to live moral lives. (Galatians 5:16–26)

Justification

Paul teaches that the justice of God was saving justice at its best. God is faithful, fulfilling the promises made in the Old Testament covenant. Through the sin of Adam and Eve the human

family was alienated from God. Through Christ the human family is called back into relationship with God. This process of reuniting the human family with God is called justification. (Romans 3:21–31) It is impossible for us to justify ourselves; we are only justified by being united in faith with Jesus Christ and by accepting the gift of grace won by Christ. (Romans 5:1–2) We can only be made right with God and set free from a life of immoral living by accepting the gift of God's reconciling grace.

Life in the Spirit

Paul teaches that the love of God is being poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. (Romans 5:5) The Holy Spirit is the source of all love. The Holy Spirit creates a bond between us and God like children bound to a father. (Romans 8:14–16) The Holy Spirit not only establishes our relationship with the Father. Even though we are weak, the Holy Spirit helps us to live faithfully within that relationship. (Romans 8:26–27) It is through the Holy Spirit that we can live in love with all people. (1 Corinthians 13:3–7)

The Moral Life

What does it mean to live a Christian moral life? Paul thought deeply about this question. He was raised as a faithful Jew. As we have seen Paul, was raised to believe that following the strict moral code of the Jewish faith was the way to salvation. Paul believed "... the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." (Romans 7:12.) What Paul realized, however, that because we are weakened by the sin of Adam and Eve, it was impossible to us to reconnect in our relationship with God through our efforts alone (Romans 7:14).

After his experience with Jesus Christ, Paul realized that he was not alone on the road to salvation. Jesus Christ has already accomplished salvation for us. In faith and Baptism, Christians receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, who is our constant guide. The Holy Spirit helps us to live in relationship with God and others.



PRAYER

O God, who taught the whole world through the preaching of the blessed **Apostle St. Paul**, draw us, we pray, nearer to you through the example of him whose conversion we celebrate today, and so make us witnesses to Your truth in the world.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Evangelisation is the 'oxygen' of Christian life, Pope Francis says, by [CNS](#), 12 Jan 2023

SHARING the faith is the "oxygen" that "invigorates and purifies" Christian life, Pope Francis said. Beginning a new series of catechesis focused on evangelisation and apostolic zeal, the Pope said when Christian life lost its aim of proclaiming the Gospel, it became "self-referential" and "atrophied".

"Without apostolic zeal, faith withers," he told people gathered yesterday in the Vatican audience hall.

The Pope specified, however, that “to be a missionary, to be apostolic, to evangelise, is not the same thing as proselytising,” or actively seeking to convert someone.

Quoting the late Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis said that “the church does not proselytise, but rather she grows by ‘attraction’ to the beauty of God’s love.

Evangelisation “does not begin by

seeking to convince others, but by bearing witness each day to the love that has watched over us and lifted us back up,” he said.

“Communicate this beauty to convince people,” Pope Francis said.

“We are the ones who announce the Lord, we do not announce ourselves, nor a political party or an ideology. Put people in contact with Jesus without convincing them. Let the Lord convince them.”

The Pope mentioned his predecessor again while greeting German pilgrims, some wearing traditional Bavarian outfits at the audience.

He said that Pope Benedict taught Christians “to look with faith at Jesus Christ, the saviour.”

Pope Francis also shared a story about a group of Korean women religious who came to Buenos Aires, Argentina, to run a hospital.

Although the women did not speak Spanish, the hospital patients were pleased with them because their gaze “communicated Jesus”.

“This is attraction, which is the opposite of proselytism,” the pope said.

Pointing to the Gospel episode in which Jesus calls Matthew to follow him even though Matthew is a widely disliked tax collector, the Pope said that Christians must look beyond people’s labels.

“Jesus does not stop at adjectives, he always looks for the substance,” he said, encouraging people to think about how they look at others.

“So often we label people for what they do or think.

“Christians are called to do like Christ,” reaching out especially to those who seem far off, the pope said. And, he said, it is “fundamental” for Christians to go out and seek others rather than waiting for people to somehow find them.

Pope Francis ended the audience by inviting those present to pray with him in silence for peace in Belarus; he had placed on stage a Marian icon he said was venerated in the country.

Saint Thomas Aquinas (Feast day 28 Jan), *Aleteia*, [Philip Kosloski](#) - published on 01/28/22
Why is St. Thomas Aquinas called the “Angelic Doctor”?

This saintly nickname tells us a lot about Aquinas' holy life and gifted work.

One of the most highly regarded saints of the Catholic Church is St. Thomas Aquinas, often referred to as the “**Angelic Doctor**.”



Faith shared: Members of the crowd reach out to Pope Francis as he leaves the weekly general audience at the Vatican on January 11. photo: CNS photo/Remo Casilli, Reuters

Why is he called a “doctor”?

First of all, in the Catholic Church, besides naming certain individuals as saints, recognizing their extraordinary practice of virtue, popes over the centuries have singled out specific saints as **Doctors of the Church**.

These men and women are seen as exemplary teachers in various theological or spiritual topics.

The official title of **doctor** stems from the Latin root word **docere**, meaning **“to teach.”**

Aquinas wrote extensively during his lifetime, producing one of the most foundational texts for Catholic theology, called the *Summa Theologiae*. In it, he answers a variety of questions that were raised in his time, and his responses continue to be used today in defence of Catholic doctrine.

What about “angelic”?

It's not entirely certain why St. Thomas became known as the “Angelic Doctor.” There are a variety of possibilities, including one explanation given by Pope Benedict XVI in a general audience in 2010.

He was also called the *Doctor Angelicus [Angelic Doctor]*, perhaps **because of his virtues** and, in particular, the **sublimity of his thought** and the **purity of his life**.

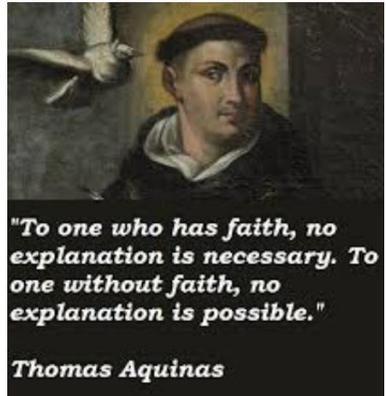
The *Catholic Encyclopedia* offers a similar explanation.

Purity of mind and body contributes in no small degree to clearness of vision. By the gift of purity, miraculously granted at the time of the mystic girdling, **God made Thomas's life angelic**; the perspicacity and depth of his intellect, Divine grace aiding, made him the **“Angelic Doctor.”**

This entry refers to a story from St. Thomas' life, recounted in his canonization records.

Two angels came to him from heaven and bound a cord around his waist, saying, “On God's behalf, we gird you with the girdle of chastity, a girdle which no attack will ever destroy ...” The angels' gift **preserved Saint Thomas from sexual temptation** and bestowed upon him an **enduring purity** that ennobled all his thoughts and actions.

St. Thomas also wrote extensively about **angels**, and his theology on angels is one of the most comprehensive in all of Church history. For all these reasons, St. Thomas Aquinas is known as the “Angelic Doctor.”



Nothing can diminish the value of any human being, Pope says, by CNS 18 Jan 2023

NO physical limitation or setback can diminish the value of any human being because each person is a unique and beloved child of God, Pope Francis said.

“We are not anonymous, we are not photocopies, we are all originals!. And this is how we should be – originals, not photocopies,” he said during an audience at the Vatican on January 14 with members of the Pope John XXIII Community association.

“God knows us one by one, with our name and our face, which is unique.

“Certainly, we also have our limitations; some of us unfortunately have heavy limitations to bear.

“But this detracts nothing from the value of a person: each one is unique, a son or daughter of God, each one is a brother or sister of Jesus.”

“A Christian community that welcomes the person as he or she is thus helps to see them as God does,” which is with a look of love, he said.

“God also sees our limitations, it is true, and helps us to bear them,” he said. “

“But God looks above all at the heart and sees every person in his or her entirety. God sees us as an image of Jesus, his only begotten son, and with his love he helps us to become more and more like him.”

The Pope thanked the many families at the audience who offer foster care, emphasising the importance of welcoming children and others into a loving home so they may be “regenerated by Christian love.”

These are men and women “who open the doors of their home to give a family to those who do not have one. A real family; not a job, but a life choice. In it there is room for everyone: minors, people with disabilities, the elderly, Italians or foreigners, and anyone who is looking for a fixed point from which to start again or a family in which to find themselves,” he said.

Pope Francis also thanked those who were unable to be at the day’s audience and had sent him their stories and questions.

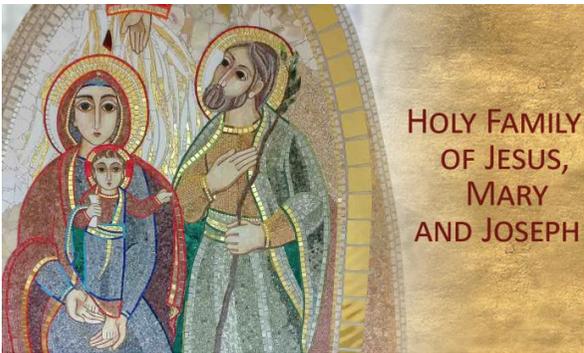
“I would like to address some of you personally,” he said, such as Sara, 13, who fled Iraq and carries in her heart “the holy desire that children not be robbed of their childhood: May God help you achieve this.”

The people offered guidance to others without naming them, urging one child who “would like to see your grandmother who has gone to heaven,” to “speak with her in your heart and follow her good example, and one day you will see her again.”

Another young person, the Pope said, “like many teenagers,” wrote about the “struggle to perceive the beauty of Mass.” But the Pope responded, “Do not fear; at the right moment, the living Jesus will let you feel his presence.”

Pope Francis also thanked a “little friend, who remembers the innocents who are killed in the womb.”

Noting that many members of the community met online to pray the rosary for peace every Sunday, the Pope told them, “God listens to your prayer for peace, even if he does not seem to. God listens to it, and we believe that God gives us peace, immediately, today.”



**Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
I give you, my heart and
my soul.**

**Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
assist me in my last
agony.**

**Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
may I breathe forth
my soul in peace with
you.**

Amen.



Pontifical Requiem Mass for the late George Cardinal Pell AC 2 February 2023

The Funeral Mass for our late Archbishop will be held on Thursday 2 February 2023 at 11:00am at St Mary's Cathedral. Members of the public are invited to attend.

If you're unable to attend the Funeral Mass, there will also be other opportunities to pay our respects to our late Archbishop, George Cardinal Pell at St Mary's Cathedral:

Wednesday 1 February

9:30am Reception of the Body and Commencement of Lying in State
1:10pm A Mass for the Dead
5:30pm Evening Prayer and Vigil
8:00pm A Mass for the Dead

Thursday 2 February

6:45am Mass for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord
11:00am Pontifical Requiem Mass (Cathedral Doors open from 9:00am)

Please continue to pray for the repose of the soul of our late Archbishop.

**NB: There will be no 10:00am Mass on Thursday 2 Feb at St Peter's Church;
However, Mass for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord will be celebrated
at 5:00pm at St Peter's**