

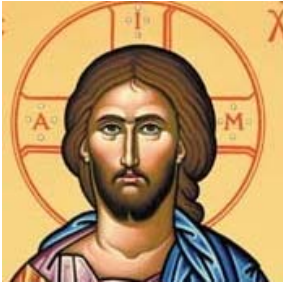
JANUARY 2009 FEAST DAYS

Thursday, January 1 — Mary, Mother of God



Of all the Marian feasts of the church, this one has a primary place. It celebrates Mary's role in the incarnation and in redemption. In this role, her special relationship with her son is emphasized and she is acknowledged as a model of the church.

Saturday, January 3 — The Most Holy Name of Jesus



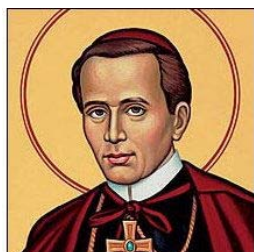
Since New Testament times the name of Jesus has been honored. Through the efforts of St. Bernardine of Siena, devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus was promoted through the inscription of the monogram of the Holy Name, IHS (an abbreviation of the Greek name for Jesus) and the addition of the name of Jesus to the *Hail Mary*.

Sunday, January 4 — Epiphany of the Lord



Together with Easter and Pentecost, this feast was originally one of the three principal feasts of the church. It celebrates the manifestation of God to non-Jewish nations. We no longer need to travel far, like the Magi, to find Jesus. He is present among us as we worship together.

Monday, January 5 — Saint John Neumann



When St. John Neumann (1811-1860), the first Redemptorist to make profession in the United States, heard he was being considered as the bishop of Philadelphia, he went to great lengths — unsuccessfully — to avoid his appointment. He was the first American bishop canonized, and a great promoter of schools.

Tuesday, January 6 — Blessed André Bessette



Known to millions as Brother André, he was born in 1845. Orphaned by 12, he was unschooled, small and sickly. In 1870 he joined the Congregation of the Holy Cross, and for 40 years served as the porter at their school in Montreal. He prayed with the sick and afflicted through the intercession of St. Joseph. More and more people came to the school to seek out the “Miracle Man of Montreal.” In 1904, assisted by lay friends, he built a wooden chapel to house a statue of St. Joseph. Over the years, the chapel grew into a basilica and today welcomes more than two million visitors each year. Brother André lived to be 91 and was declared blessed in 1982.

Saturday, January 10 — Anniversary of the Death of Venerable Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, 1828



“Adèle did not set out to be a model for anyone. She sought only to do the will of her loving God. And, like the Mother of Jesus eighteen hundred years earlier, in so doing she allowed God to do great things in her. Her life, her work, and especially her ideas and her ideals can continue to inspire us today.”

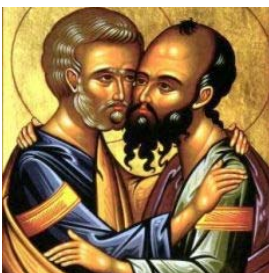
from *Adèle, Aristocrat for the Poor* by Joseph Stefanelli, SM

Sunday, January 11 — Baptism of the Lord



As Jesus is reborn through the waters of baptism, with the spirit of God upon him, John's announcement of God's promised one is fulfilled. This feast marks the close of the Christmas season. Ordinary time begins.

January 18 - 25 — Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



Meeting of St. Peter and St. Paul

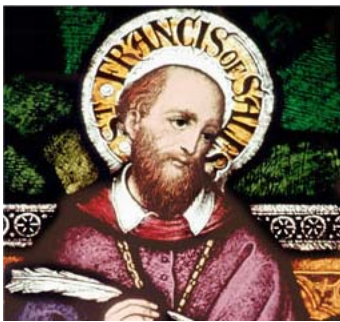
This year, Christians around the world will pray for unity: “that they may be one in your hand” (Ezechiel 37:17). Flowing from this central text of Ezechiel, the reflection during this week brings us to a deeper awareness that the church's unity is also for the renewal of human community. With this awareness comes a grave responsibility: that all who confess Christ as Lord should seek to fulfill his prayer “that they may all be one so that the world may believe that you sent me” (John 17:21).

Thursday, January 22 — Anniversary of the Death of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, 1850



“We feel called to give new vitality to the witness of Blessed William Joseph’s life and teachings. We recall his special sensitivity to the world in which he lived and his missionary passion toward the world he loved. It is our task now to incarnate in our lives that legacy which, with his beatification, is a gift for the whole Church.” from *Sent by the Spirit*, #2

Saturday, January 24 — Saint Francis de Sales



Francis was born in France in 1567. After obtaining doctorates in both canon and civil law by the age of 24, he rejected opportunities for a brilliant career and chose religious life instead. Appointed Bishop of Geneva in 1602, he reorganized the diocese, reformed religious education, established a seminary and founded several schools. He became one of the principal leaders of the Catholic Reformation. Together with Jane Frances de Chantal, he founded the Visitation Sisters. Canonized in 1665, he is a Doctor of the Church.

Sunday, January 25 — Third Sunday in Ordinary Time



In this Jubilee Year marking the 2000th anniversary of St. Paul’s birth, the Mass celebrating *The Conversion of St. Paul*, as found in the Roman Missal for January 25, may be used today. In such a case, the second reading of the Mass is taken from the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time and the Creed is said.

Wednesday, January 28 — Saint Thomas Aquinas



At 19, Thomas joined the newly formed Dominicans and studied in Italy and France. With his teacher, Albert the Great, he developed the theological “Scholastic method,” which dominated Catholic teaching for centuries. A man of towering intellect, Thomas was also a very humble mystic. He was canonized in 1323 and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1567.

Saturday, January 31 — Saint John Bosco



Born in Italy in 1815, John studied for the priesthood and was ordained in Turin. He resolved to devote himself to working among disadvantaged boys. Thus, he formed the Salesian Society and began educating boys of the poor and working classes. With the help of St. Mary Mazzarello, he also established the Salesian Sisters to do similar work among girls. He was canonized in 1934.