

FAMILY: A COMMUNITY OF LOVE

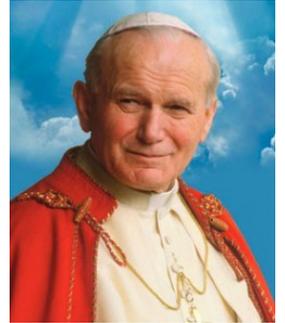
“How precious is the family as the privileged place for transmitting the faith!” -Pope Francis

SAINTS AND PRAYERS

(from World Meeting of Families, 2015 | www.worldmeeting2015.org)

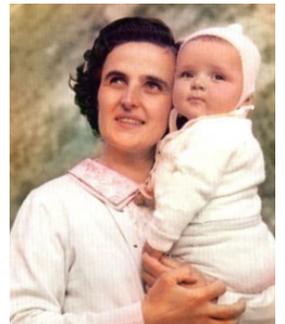
Saint Pope John Paul II (patron saint of World Youth Day) Feast day: October 22

Saint Pope John Paul II was born Karol Jozef Wojtyla in the town of Wadowice, Poland on May 18, 1920. He was elected Pope in 1978, with his pontificate lasting almost 27 years, when he passed on April 2, 2005. Saint Pope John Paul II is remembered for many things, including his love of young people. He established the World Youth Days which served to bring together millions of young people from around the globe. Saint Pope John Paul II was known for his ability and willingness to reach people around the world as one of the most traveled world leaders, visiting 129 countries during his papacy. His passion for strengthening the family was illustrated in 1994 when he began the World Meeting of Families. Saint Pope John Paul II was canonized on April 27, 2014.



Saint Gianna (patron of mothers and unborn children) Feast day: April 28

Saint Gianna was a pediatrician, wife and mother who is known for refusing an abortion and a hysterectomy when she was pregnant with her fourth child, despite knowing that continuing with the pregnancy could result in her death. Gianna was beatified by Pope John Paul II on April 24, 1994, and canonized on May 16, 2004. Gianna’s husband Pietro, and their child Laura, were present at the canonization ceremony, the first time in the history of the Church that a husband witnessed his wife’s canonization. In his homily at her canonization Mass, Pope John Paul II called Gianna “a simple, but more than ever, significant messenger of divine love.”



Mary, Undoer of Knots

Mary, Undoer of Knots, has drawn global adoration and devotion, especially in the time of Pope Francis’ election. The Mother of God miraculously conceived Jesus after being visited by the angel Gabriel who told her she would have a child. As the mother of God, Mary is loved and honored more than any other saint, known as the ultimate mother and leader of family. Mary Undoer of Knots is revered for her love and devotion to her son Jesus. She is known for her ability to “undo” the knots, the challenges, in our lives. Her love and compassion for us as the children of God shows us just how much she is the mother of the Holy Family



Saint Joseph (Patron Saint of Husbands, Fathers and the Working Individual) Feast day: March 19

As the husband of the blessed mother, St. Joseph is known in a way as the foster father of Jesus. After being visited by an angel, Joseph leaves with Mary, protecting her and the birth of the son of God. St. Joseph was a father figure for Jesus, and a part of his childhood. Saint Joseph signifies the importance of fatherhood and family, as he took on the role of guardian of the Holy Family from God.



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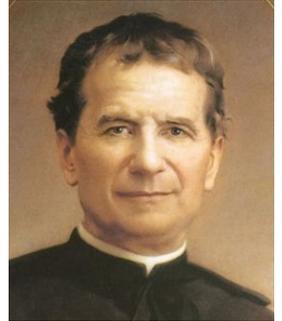
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Saint John Bosco (patron of youth) Feast day: January 31

Saint John Bosco is known for his dedication to helping disadvantaged youth. Saint John Bosco was born in 1815 in Piedmont, Italy. He is known for his life in Turin, Italy where he focused on improving life, mainly through enhancing education opportunity, for street children and troubled youth. He founded many organizations and programs for educating and caring for the children of the poor. He founded the Salesian Cooperators which incorporated his educational mission to the poor, as well as the publication of the Salesian Bulletin, which continues to be published in 30 languages. Saint John Bosco died in 1888 and was canonized in 1934.



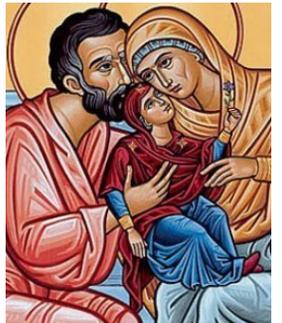
Saint Anne (patron of grandmothers) Feast day: July 26

Saint Anne is known as the mother of the Blessed Mother, and the grandmother of Jesus. After 20 years of marriage to Joachim from Nazareth, Saint Anne was without child. Joachim went into the desert to plead with God for a child. An angel later appeared to tell Joachim that they would be given a child to name Mary and dedicate to God. While Joachim was away, Anne went to the garden where she cried out to the lord. An angel appeared and told her that she would have a daughter, Mary. Soon after, Anne gave birth to a daughter, Mary, the blessed mother. Saint Anne became a grandmother after the birth of Jesus.



Saint Joachim (patron of grandfathers) Feast day: July 26

Saint Joachim is known as the father of the Blessed Mother, and the grandfather of Jesus. He and his wife Saint Anne, were childless after 20 years of marriage. Saint Joachim went into the desert and pleaded to God for a child. After fasting in the desert, an angel appeared and told him that he and Anne would have a child to be named Mary, and dedicated to God. While this was happening, Anne was home. She too pleaded to God, and was also visited by an Angel who told her what Joachim was told. Soon after, Anne gave birth to a girl, who went on to be the mother of God.



Saint Raphael (patron of single people) Feast day: September 29

Saint Raphael is one of seven Archangels. He was sent by God to help Tobit, Tobias and Sarah. At the time, Tobias' betrothed, Sarah, had seven bridegrooms perish on their wedding nights. Raphael accompanied Tobias disguised as a man named Azariah. Raphael helped him through his difficulties and taught him how to safely marry Sarah. For this reason, the Church calls Raphael the angel of love, and the patron of single persons, medical doctors and travelers.



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SAINTS AND PRAYERS

Prayer for Families

Dear God our Father, you have called all Christian families to be a sign of your love to the world.

Help us to be generous with the gifts of life and love that you have showered on our family. May we share them so that our homes become true signs of unitive and fruitful love.

Let us never forget to thank you each day for all that sustains us and to look to Christ, who comes to us in the events of family life, in the sacraments of the Church, and in service to the poor.

In all of this, our family becomes a living expression of your Church, a hallowed home of life and love. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may all of us—spouses, parents, and children—share, as members of his Body, in Jesus’ mission to build a civilization of love. Father, we ask this in Jesus’ name in union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Family Prayer to the Holy Family

O Heavenly Father, our loving God,
you have given us the Holy Family as our patron
to bless and guide our families
that the fruit of the Holy Spirit,
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,
goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control,
shall reign in our homes.

As husbands and wives,
teach us to love our spouses more than ever.
As parents, give us wisdom and knowledge
in rearing our offspring to be responsible
and successful Christians forever.
As brothers and sisters,
may we learn to care and support one another
and be of inspiration to each other.
As children, teach us to be obedient
just as Jesus showed obedience
and respect to Mary and Joseph.

As Christians, melt us, mold us, fill us, and use us,
in spreading the good news in our community
that they may see Christ in us.
When trials come, help us to face them
with trusting faith and confidently hope
that all things work for good for those who love God.
May we have a happy holy family forever through Jesus,
Mary, and Joseph, our miraculous patron,
the adorable Holy Family.
Amen

Family Commitment Prayer

Prayer card available to download at www.usccb.org by searching “Family Commitment Prayer”.