



## Post Primary Diocesan Advisers R.E. News Blog - September 2024

Dear Chaplain and R.E. Teachers,

We are at the beginning of a new school year. The days ahead are full of opportunities, challenges and possibilities. As teachers and chaplains, our hearts are full of mixed emotion ranging from excitement to trepidation, from apprehension to anticipation. It is not easy to begin again and yet hope prompts us, impels us, to do so, knowing that the work we undertake as teachers and chaplains is not simply about imparting knowledge but about helping to shape the life of every single student placed in our care.

The start of a new school year gives us the opportunity to review our Ethos Statement and our willingness to think afresh and manage change in a positive way. A good Ethos Statement will describe the characteristics which make your school unique and define your school's pathway to success. It will help you to reflect on the key qualities and values you wish to encourage in your students. The challenge will constantly be to communicate these values. I would encourage you to read your Ethos Statement. Open it. Allow it to speak to you. It will show you where to begin. Remind your students of your school's founding story. It is a living story which you are entrusting to them. They will hold it and develop it during the coming year. They will hand it on to younger students most especially by their example and their attitudes. Listen to the responses they give you. Nurture their responses.

May each day of this new academic year find us ready to begin anew, ready to hope and believe in the goodness working in, through and around us, ready to wonder and to forgive, ready to serve with generosity and compassion.

We are here to support you in any way we can. We look forward very much to visiting you in your schools during the year.

Do not hesitate to contact us at our diocesan offices at any time: Education Secretariat, 51 Home Farm Road, Drumcondra, DO9 W5W4.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Sr. Bernadette Carron

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**Archbishop Dermot Farrell invites us to a celebration of the Eucharist to pray together that our new school year be a rich and blessed one.**



*“What we experience in our daily lives is what we bring to the Eucharist, there to express it, celebrate it and deepen it by plunging it into the great mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection made present again in the Mass.”*

**Our Splendid Eucharist**

**Raymond Moloney SJ**

**The Mass will be celebrated in St. Patrick’s /DCU on Thursday, September 26th at 7 p.m.**

*We invite you to come to this Mass.*

*Join us in praying for ourselves as teachers/chaplains and for our students, our schools and our whole school community.*

## **REFLECTIONS FOR TEACHERS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR**

It helps now and then to step back and take a long view.

The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a fraction  
of the magnificent enterprise that is God’s work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying  
that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection; no pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the Church’s mission.

No set of goals and objectives include everything.

This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water the seeds already planted knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realising this.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,  
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference  
between the master builder and the worker.  
We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs.  
We are prophets of a future not our own.

Oscar Romero



## The Beatitudes For People with Special Needs

Blessed are you who take time to listen to difficult speech, for you help us to know that if we persevere we can be understood

Blessed are you who walk with us in public places, and ignore the stares of strangers, for in your companionship we find havens of relaxation.

Blessed are you who never bid us to "hurry up" and more blessed are you, who do not snatch out tasks from our hands to do them for us, for often we need time rather than help.

Blessed are you who stand beside us as we enter new and untried ventures, for our failures will be outweighed by the times we surprise ourselves and you.

Blessed are you who ask for help, for our greatest need is to be needed.

Blessed are you when by all the ways you assure us that the things that make us individuals are not our peculiar muscles, nor our wounded nervous systems, nor in our difficulties in learning, but in the God-given self which no infirmities can confine.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and know that you give us reassurances that could never be spoken in words, for you deal with us as Christ dealt with his children.

You may like to use one of the following prayers in your own school.

1. **Prayer for the Opening of the School Year:**

*“Lord Jesus, we ask for Your help as we begin this new school year. Allow us to experience Your presence in the many blessings You put before us. Open our eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings. [Open our hearts and minds to new friends and new teachers.](#)”<sup>1</sup>*

2. **Prayer for Opening of School Year:**

*“As we begin a new school year, we ask for Your help and pray Your blessing on everybody in this school. Show us how to work together for the good of all. May we share our talents and abilities to the full and grow in knowledge, wisdom, and happiness. [Give us the grace to become more like Jesus in the ways we think and behave.](#)”<sup>2</sup>*

**The following Poem was written following the observance of an elderly couple offering each other the sign of peace**

SHE REACHED ACROSS THE PEW, OFFERING HER HAND,  
HE GENTLY HELD IT, BESTOWING THERE A TENDER KISS,  
BORN FROM YEARS OF LOVE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.  
IT WAS THEIR SUNDAY MORNING SIGN OF PEACE,  
SPECIAL TO THEM AND  
AN INSPIRATION TO US WHO SAW IT,  
TO RECEIVE AND SHARE GENTLY  
THE PEACE OF JESUS.



**Paidir do Mhúinteoirí**

Cuir ar mo chumas múineadh le heagna mar cabhraímse i múnú na haigne.

Ullmhaigh mé chun múineadh le fírinne mar cabhraímse i múnú coinsiasa.

Spreg mé chun múineadh le fíis mar cabhraímse i múnú na todhchaí.

Cuir ar mo chumas múineadh le grá mar cabhraímse i múnú an domhain.

“Dealróidh na saoithe mar loinnir na spéire, agus iad siúd a theagasc an fhíréantacht do mhórán mar reanna neimhe ar feadh na síoraíochta.”

(Leabhar Dhainéil 12: 3)

***As we prepare for the Opening Year Masses in our Schools this article asks you to consider those in your school community who may have a gluten intolerance.***

***Holy Communion for those with Coeliac Disease:***

We often hear from people who, due to a severe gluten intolerance, can only receive Holy Communion by partaking of a chalice in which no particle of a host has been dipped. Some are deeply appreciative that Holy Communion is offered in this way at nearly every parish Mass. (See GIRM [#85, #281]). Others, however, are continually disappointed that nothing is done to facilitate the possibility of their receiving Holy Communion in this way in their parishes. Let us work for an inclusive liturgy by having clear signs, announcements and prepared sacristans and ministers of holy communion to enable people, who seek this service, to receive as seamlessly as possible. For those who can receive special often-called gluten free hosts it might be best for the priest to have a small table beside him with a ciborium for distribution of holy communion in this way. It is important that those who come forward to receive communion from a priest or minister are not asked to serve themselves. Communication is key as we also keep in mind visitors for weddings and funerals who may not know the parish routine and might be too shy to ask.

***Year of Prayer 2024:*** Details of the five prayer services are now at [www.litmus.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.litmus.dublindiocese.ie) under latest news.

Please see the Mission & Ministry Ezine at <https://www.missionministry.ie/e-zine/> for more news from the LitMus Office.

## WEEKLY EZINE

*Sharing the Good News* is the newsletter of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference. If you would like to receive this weekly ezine, you can do so at <https://catholicnews.ie/newsletter/>. You are encouraged to invite others to do so too. Send articles and photographs for use in *Sharing the Good News* to [info@catholicbishops.ie](mailto:info@catholicbishops.ie).



## EXPLORE THE BOOK OF RUTH. Are you interested in some Study?

Would you like an opportunity to continue to: open yourself to the inner wholeness and transformation offered to you by God's Word?; discover hidden gems in the Biblical text through a close reading of it?; explore Biblical characters, experiences, themes, values and emotions and how they shape your life?; enhance your capacity to hear God's Word by fine tuning the quality of your presence and your active listening? If so, this invitation to **explore the Book of Ruth** may be for you.

A golden thread of God's loving kindness weaves its way through the Book of Ruth. During our time together we will explore how this theme of loving kindness emerges and evolves through various encounters within the story. We will also reflect on how this theme influences our own lives and choices, including our relationships with God, self, others and the environment.

**Option 1:** Online/Zoom – Seven Tuesday evenings (7.30pm-9pm) – 3rd, 10th, 17th September, 1st, 8th, 29th October, 5th November. **Option 2:** In person (Dublin – venue to be confirmed) – Two Saturdays (10am-4.30pm) – 7th September & 5th October

**For further information contact Thérèse Fitzgerald at 089 9674758 or [theresefitzgerald7@gmail.com](mailto:theresefitzgerald7@gmail.com).**

*May God reward you for your deeds ... under whose wings you have come for refuge! (Ruth 2:12)*

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK 2025

Alan Hynes confirmed the dates for Catholic Schools Week.

Initial details on the week may be found

here: <https://catholiceducation.ie/catholic-schools-week-2025-alive-in-christ>

NAPPDA members work together to collate resources from around the country for teachers and chaplains to use with their schools and parishes. Below are some that have been shared:-

1. On-Line Prayer : <http://www.sacredspace.ie>

2. Dynamic Catholics is a site designed to re-energise the Catholic Church by developing world-class resources, inspiring people to rediscover the genius of Catholicism is:- See: <http://dynamiccatholic.com>

3. The Daily 3 Minute Retreat is a short prayer break that can give twenty-four hours of peace:

See: <http://www.loyolapress.com/3minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer>



*Declan Lawlor, Senior Education Specialist in the Diocesan Education Secretariat, presenting Pope Francis with a copy of Legio Mariae: The Official Handbook of the Legion of Mary in Rome recently*





**Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network**



<https://www.popesprayer.va/>

<https://popesprayerusa.net/>

Small Group Reflection

<https://popesprayerusa.net/popes-intentions/>

### **Pope Francis' intention – September 2024**

#### **FOR THE CRY OF THE EARTH**

We pray that each one of us will hear and take to heart the cry of the Earth and of victims of natural disasters and climactic change, and that all will undertake to personally care for the world in which we live.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHzTDLOYNZA>

#### **Prayer to begin your RE Team Meetings**

Our Father,

As we begin this meeting, we start by asking for humility. Whenever ideas are shared, there will always be the temptation for us to be proud. We will be tempted to defend our ideas too strongly. We will be tempted to dismiss others' opinions without carefully considering them.

But we know that "God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble."

(James 4:6)

Help us to approach this meeting with a humble heart, open to hearing and learning from one another. Let your spirit guide our discussions so that we may come to decisions that are not just based on our own understanding, but also on your wisdom and guidance.

We thank you for the reminder to remain humble and seek unity in all that we do.

May this meeting be a reflection of your love, grace, and humility.

In your precious name,

Amen.

## **SEASON OF CREATION 2024**

The resources for the Season of Creation are now available at



<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/laudato-si/season-of-creation-2024/>



# TO HOPE AND ACT WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

*The firstfruits of hope*  
(Rom 8:19-25)

As we begin a new year I wish to commend all the Students and their Teachers who this term will embark on many faith activities and new journeys.

In particular we extend our good wishes to those travelling with the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, we look forward to hearing from you on your return.

New Teams will be commissioned for the Ember Programme during this month

And

Students are currently beginning their Pope John Paul11 Awards.

May the Holy Spirit guide and direct you all in the months ahead



# ANNIVERSARY PILGRIMAGE

**800th anniversary of the Canonization of St Laurence O'Toole. 10th May – 12th May 2025.** Three-day Pilgrimage with Fr Ivan Tonge to Eu, France.

Tours & Religious Programme

Full religious programme organised by Marian Pilgrimages with a complete programme of sightseeing and visits to sites of interest.

Mass daily & Spiritual activities.

## September Feast Days

**8<sup>th</sup> September Mass in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mass to celebrate her birthday.** Due to the feast day falling on a Sunday this year Our Lady's birthday is being remembered on Sept 7<sup>th</sup>. On Our Lady's birthday the Church celebrates the first dawning of redemption with the appearance in the world of the Saviour's mother, Mary. The Blessed Virgin occupies a unique place in the history of salvation, and she has the highest mission ever commended to any creature. We rejoice that the Mother of God is our Mother, too. Let us often call upon the Blessed Virgin as "Cause of our joy", one of the most beautiful titles in her litany.



For Pope Francis, Mary is an icon of wisdom, strength, courage and joyful hope. Her unconditional "yes" to God encourages modern believers to say "yes" to God's call today. We must turn to Mary often, he says, for she is a mighty intercessor and a faithful companion on our spiritual journey. The writings, homilies, prayers, talks, and even tweets of Pope Francis on Mary are available in this book, "Mother Mary" and it gathers his most important and inspiring words about Mary.

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/nativity-of-the-blessed-virgin-mary/>

<http://education.dublindiocese.ie/september-8th-our-ladys-birthday/>

## 9<sup>th</sup> September Feast day of St Ciaran

Clonmacnoise was founded by St. Ciarán, who was born around 512. His father was a travelling carpenter called Beoit and his mother was called Darerca. His father was a carpenter and chariot maker. Ciarán was born and reared in an area that is in the present-day Roscommon. He had several brothers and sisters. Some of them also entered the religious life.



As a young boy, Ciarán helped his family herd cattle and studied his lessons while out in the fields. When he was older, he went to study with St. Finian at Clonard, which is in modern-day Meath. He later studied on Aran with St. Enda, and later to Senan of Scattery Island where he was ordained a priest. After spending time in various monasteries, Ciarán eventually founded his monastery at Clonmacnoise in January of 544.

### Foundation at Clonmacnois

Here he made his foundation with ten companions on the Shannon River but died at the age of 33 but while it was still being built. He became very ill with a plague and died, – a young man in his early thirties. His feast day is September 9, the date on which he died. Despite the young age at which he died, he had managed to found a monastic school whose fame would endure down the centuries. Clonmacnois that became famous throughout Europe.

### Mac an tSaoir

The son of a carpenter or wheelwright, *mac an tsaoir*, Ciarán, is often called “the younger” to distinguish him from Ciarán of Saighir, called *Sean Chiarán*, or Ciarán the Senior.

### Ciarán’s Cow

This Ciarán was from Connaught and went to study under Finian of Clonard, taking with him his favourite cow, which his family donated for his education. The monastery could profit from milk and butter, calves, meat or from the hide that would be turned into parchment. The skin of Ciarán’s cow was preserved in his memory and was noted for miracles – it had the reputation that every man who died resting on it would get eternal life. And later, the book written on this famous cowskin, *Leabhar na hUidhre*, became one of Ireland’s most important manuscripts. This is the book which preserves the legend of the *Táin Bó Cuailnge*.

### Influence

Clonmacnois later became one of the most influential monasteries in Europe. Alcuin of York (735-804), the most renowned of Saxon scholars who became an advisor at the court of Charlemagne, studied here under Colcu the wise in the eighth century. He wrote letters to him and sent presents from himself and the emperor. The monastery survived the Viking raids and the Norman wars up until 1552.

## 14<sup>th</sup> September The Triumph of the Cross

### Why Do We Celebrate this Feast?

It's easy to understand that the Cross is special because Christ used it as the instrument of our salvation. But after His Resurrection, why would Christians continue to look to the Cross?



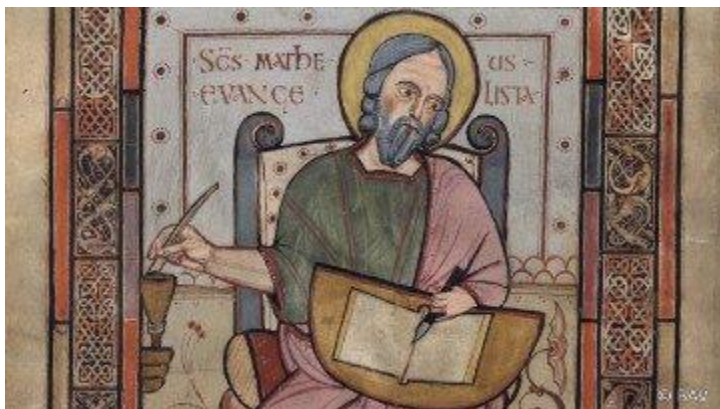
Christ Himself offered us the answer: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" ([Luke 9:23](#)). The point of taking up our own cross is not simply self-sacrifice; in doing so, we unite ourselves to the sacrifice of Christ on His Cross.

When we participate in the [Mass](#), the Cross is there, too. The "unbloody sacrifice" offered on the altar is the re-presentation of Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross. When we receive the Sacrament of [Holy Communion](#), we do not simply unite ourselves to Christ; we nail ourselves to the Cross, dying with Christ so that we might rise with Him.

"For the Jews require signs, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness . . ." ([1 Corinthians 1:22-23](#)). Today, more than ever, non-Christians see the Cross as foolishness. What kind of Savior triumphs through death?

For Christians, however, the Cross is the crossroads of history and the Tree of Life. Christianity without the Cross is meaningless: Only by uniting ourselves to Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross can we enter eternal life.

## 21<sup>st</sup> September St Matthew Apostle



Lake Tiberias sparkled and, as usual, Matthew was there, sitting at the custom desk at Capernaum, to collect the taxes that the Jews had to pay to the Romans. He was a publican, despised by the people because he was considered in

league with the oppressors. Probably, Matthew had become accustomed to it, but that day he heard a different voice. A man told him, "Follow me," and Matthew got up and followed the man ever after. That man was Jesus, and Matthew's life was no longer as before.

**A sinner who meets Jesus**

Levi organized a great banquet for Jesus, who went with his disciples, stirring up the scorn of scribes and Pharisees because there were in attendance publicans and sinners. Jesus' answer greatly touched Matthew. "They that are well have no need of a physician, but they that are sick," said the Nazarene, adding, "For I came not to call the just, but sinners." Matthew, who was a sinner, left everything and followed Jesus, becoming one of the Twelve. He is also named a few times in the Acts of the Apostles. The proclamation of Christ would be his mission.

According to some sources, he would die of natural causes. Other traditions, considered untrustworthy, have it that his earthly life ended in Ethiopia. In the description of the four beings of the Apocalypse (eagle, ox, lion, man) Saint Matthew is associated with that of man. His relics are located in the crypt of the Cathedral of Salerno, where his feast day is marked with a solemn procession.

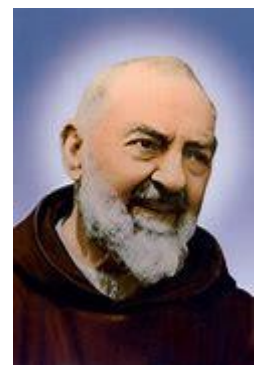
### Author of the Gospel for Jews

He is the author of the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, which was almost certainly written not in Greek but Aramaic. The Gospel of Matthew is written with an audience of Christians of Jewish origin in mind: the text emphasizes that Jesus is the Messiah who fulfills the promises of the Old Testament.

### September 23<sup>rd</sup> Feast of St Padre Pio

"Far be it from me to glory except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (*Gal 6:14*).

Like the Apostle Paul, Padre Pio da Pietrelcina placed at the centre of his life and apostolic work the Cross of his Lord as his strength, his wisdom and his glory. Inflamed by love of Jesus Christ, he became like him in the sacrifice of himself for the salvation of the world. In his following and imitation of the Crucified Christ he was so generous and perfect that he could have said: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (*Gal 2:20*). And the treasures of grace which God had granted him so lavishly and unceasingly he passed on through his ministry, serving the men and women who came to him in ever greater numbers, and bringing to birth an immense host of spiritual sons and daughters.



This worthy follower of Saint Francis of Assisi was born on 25 May 1887 at Pietrelcina in the Archdiocese of Benevento, the son of Grazio Forgione and Maria Giuseppa De Nunzio. He was baptized the next day and given the name Francesco. At the age of twelve he received the Sacrament of Confirmation and made his First Holy Communion.



On 6 January 1903, at the age of sixteen, he entered the novitiate of the Capuchin Friars at Morcone, where on 22 January he took the Franciscan habit and the name Brother Pio. At the end of his novitiate year he took simple vows, and on 27 January 1907 made his solemn profession.

After he was ordained priest on 10 August 1910 at Benevento, he stayed at home with his family until 1916 for health reasons. In September of that year, he was sent to the friary of San Giovanni Rotondo and remained there until his death.

Filled with love of God and love of neighbour, Padre Pio lived to the full his vocation to work for the redemption of man, in accordance with the special mission which marked his entire life and which he exercised through the spiritual direction of the faithful: the sacramental reconciliation of penitents and the celebration of the Eucharist. The pinnacle of his apostolic activity was the celebration of Holy Mass. The faithful who took part witnessed the summit and fullness of his spirituality.

On the level of social charity, he committed himself to relieving the pain and suffering of many families, chiefly through the foundation of the Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza (House for the Relief of Suffering), opened on 5 May 1956.

For Padre Pio, faith was life: he willed everything and did everything in the light of faith. He was assiduously devoted to prayer. He passed the day and a large part of the night in conversation with God. He would say: "In books we seek God, in prayer we find him. Prayer is the key which opens God's heart". Faith led him always to accept God's mysterious will.

He was always immersed in supernatural realities. Not only was he himself a man of hope and total trust in God, but by word and example he communicated these virtues to all who approached him.

The love of God filled him and satisfied his every desire; charity was the chief inspiration of his day: to love God and to help others to love him. His special concern was to grow in charity and to lead others to do so.

He demonstrated to the full his love of neighbour by welcoming, for more than fifty years, countless people who had recourse to his ministry and his confessional, his counsel and his consolation. He was almost besieged: they sought him in church, in the sacristy, in the friary. And he gave himself to everyone, rekindling faith, dispensing grace, bringing light. But especially in the poor, the suffering and the sick he saw the image of Christ, and he gave himself particularly to them.

He exercised to an exemplary degree the virtue of prudence, acting and counselling in the light of God.

His concern was the glory of God and the good of souls. He treated everyone with justice, frankness and great respect.

The virtue of fortitude shone in him. He understood very early in life that his would be the way of the Cross, and he accepted it at once with courage and out of love. For many years,

he experienced spiritual sufferings. For years he endured the pains of his wounds with admirable serenity.

When he had to submit to investigations and restrictions in his priestly ministry, he accepted everything with profound humility and resignation. In the face of unjust accusations and calumnies he remained silent, trusting always in the judgement of God, of his immediate superiors and of his own conscience.

He habitually practised mortification in order to gain the virtue of temperance, in keeping with the Franciscan style. He was temperate in his attitude and in his way of life.

Conscious of the commitments which he had undertaken when he entered the consecrated life, he observed with generosity the vows he had professed. He was obedient in all things to the commands of his Superiors, even when they were burdensome. His obedience was supernatural in intention, universal in its scope and complete in its execution. He lived the spirit of poverty with total detachment from self, from earthly goods, from his own comfort and from honours. He always had a great love for the virtue of chastity. His behaviour was modest in all situations and with all people.

He sincerely thought of himself as useless, unworthy of God's gifts, full of weakness and infirmity, and at the same time blessed with divine favours. Amid so much admiration around him, he would say: "I only want to be a poor friar who prays".

From his youth, his health was not very robust, and especially in the last years of his life it declined rapidly. Sister Death took him well-prepared and serene on 23 September 1968 at the age of eighty-one. An extraordinary gathering of people attended his funeral.

On 20 February 1971, barely three years after the death of Padre Pio, Pope Paul VI, speaking to the Superiors of the Capuchin Order, said of him: "Look what fame he had, what a worldwide following gathered around him! But why? Perhaps because he was a philosopher? Because he was wise? Because he had resources at his disposal? Because he said Mass humbly, heard confessions from dawn to dusk and was – it is not easy to say it – one who bore the wounds of our Lord. He was a man of prayer and suffering".

Even during his lifetime, he enjoyed a vast reputation for sanctity, because of his virtues, his spirit of prayer, sacrifice and total dedication to the good of souls.

In the years following his death, his reputation for sanctity and miracles grew steadily, and became established in the Church, all over the world and among all kinds of people.

God thus showed the Church his desire to glorify on earth his faithful servant. In a short time, the Capuchin Order took the steps prescribed by canon law to begin the Cause of Beatification and Canonization. After examining the case, the Holy See, in accordance with the norm of the *Motu Proprio* "Sanctitas Clarior", granted the *nihil obstat* on 29 November 1982. The Archbishop of Manfredonia was thus enabled to introduce the Cause and set up the informative process (1983- 1990). On 7 December 1990, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints recognized its juridical validity. When the *Positio* had been completed, there was the usual discussion on whether the Servant of God had exercised the virtues to a



heroic degree. On 13 June 1997 the Special Meeting of the Theological Consultors was held and gave a positive judgement. In the Ordinary Session on 21 October 1997, with Bishop Andrea Maria Erba of Velletri-Segni, the Proposer of the Cause, together with the Cardinals and Bishops, recognized that Padre Pio da Pietrelcina had lived to a heroic degree the theological, cardinal and associated virtues.

On 18 December 1997, in the presence of Pope John Paul II, the Decree on heroic virtue was promulgated.

For the Beatification of Padre Pio, the Postulation presented to the competent Congregation the healing of Signora Consiglia De Martino of Salerno. The regular canonical process on this case was held at the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Salerno-Campagna-Acerno from July 1996 to June 1997. On 30 April 1998 at the Congregation for the Causes of Saints the Medical Board examined the miracle, and on 22 June 1998 the Special Meeting of Theological Consultors gave its judgement. On 20 October 1998 the Ordinary Congregation of the Cardinals and Bishops belonging to the Congregation was held in the Vatican. On 21 December 1998 in the presence of Pope John Paul II the Decree on the miracle was promulgated.

On 2 May 1999, during a solemn concelebrated Mass in St Peter's Square, Pope John Paul II by his apostolic authority beatified the Venerable Servant of God Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, naming 23 September as the date of his liturgical feast.

For the canonization of Blessed Padre Pio of Pietrelcina the Postulation presented to the competent Dicastery the cure of the young Matteo Pio Colella of San Giovanni Rotondo. The regular canonical process on the case was held at the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of the Diocese of Manfredonia-Vieste from 11 June to 17 October 2000. On 23 October the documents were forwarded to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. On 21 November 2001 the medical testimony was examined by the same Congregation. The Theological Consultors held a special Congress on 11 December and on 18 December the ordinary Session of Cardinals and Bishops took place. On 20 December, in the presence of John Paul II, the Decree on the miracle was promulgated. Finally, on 28 February 2002 the Decree of Canonization was promulgated.

[\*Beatification \(May 2, 1999\)\*](#)

[\*Canonization \(June 16, 2002\)\*](#)

**29<sup>th</sup> September Feast of the Archangels** The liturgy celebrates the **Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, archangels** who are venerated in the tradition of the Church. Michael (*Who is like God?*) was the archangel who fought against Satan and all his evil angels, defending all the friends of God. He is the protector of all humanity from the snares of the devil. Gabriel (*Strength of God*) announced to Zachariah the forthcoming birth of John the Baptist, and to Mary, the birth of Jesus. His greeting to the Virgin, "Hail, full of grace," is

one of the most familiar and frequent prayers of the Christian people. Raphael (*Medicine of God*) is the archangel who took care of Tobias on his journey.

"In her liturgy, the Church joins with the angels to adore the thrice-holy God. She invokes their assistance (in the funeral liturgy's *In Paradisum deducant te angeli*. . . ["May the angels lead you into Paradise. . ."]). Moreover, in the "Cherubic Hymn" of the Byzantine Liturgy, she celebrates the memory of certain angels more particularly (St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael, and the guardian angels)" (#335).

Angels are pure, created spirits. The name angel means servant or messenger of God. Angels are celestial or heavenly beings, on a higher order than human beings. Angels have no bodies and do not depend on matter for their existence or activity. They are distinct from saints, which men can become. Angels have intellect and will, and are immortal. They are a vast multitude, but each is an individual person. Archangels are one of the nine choirs of angels listed in the Bible. In ascending order, the choirs or classes are 1) Angels, 2) Archangels, 3) Principalities, 4) Powers, 5) Virtues, 6) Dominations, 7) Thrones, 8) Cherubim, and 9) Seraphim.

The previous liturgical calendar (1962) celebrated solely the feast of St. Michael on September 29. St. Gabriel was observed on March 24 and St. Raphael on October 24. This is why there are more traditions regarding "Michaelmas" instead of all three archangels.



### **St. Michael**

The name of the archangel Michael means, in Hebrew, *who is like unto God?* and he is also known as "the prince of the heavenly host." He is usually pictured as a strong warrior, dressed in armour and wearing sandals. His name appears in Scripture four times, twice in the Book of Daniel, and once each in the Epistle of St. Jude and the Book of Revelation. From Revelation we learn of the battle in heaven, with St. Michael and his angels combatting Lucifer and the other fallen angels (or devils). We invoke St. Michael to help us in our fight against Satan; to rescue souls from Satan, especially at the hour of death; to be the champion of the Jews in the Old Testament

and now Christians; and to bring souls to judgment.

This day is referred to as "Michaelmas" in many countries and is also one of the harvest feast days. In England this is one of the "quarter days," which was marked by hiring servants, electing magistrates, and beginning of legal and university terms. This day also

marks the opening of the deer and other large game hunting season. In some parts of Europe, especially Germany, Denmark, and Austria, a special wine called "Saint Michael's Love" (Michelsminne) is drunk on this day. The foods for this day vary depending on nationality. In the British Isles, for example, goose was the traditional meal for Michaelmas, eaten for prosperity, France has waffles or *Gaufres* and the traditional fare in Scotland used to be St. Michael's Bannock (*Struan Micheil*) — a large, scone-like cake. In Italy, gnocchi is the traditional fare.

**Patronage:** against danger at sea; against temptations; ambulance drivers; arms manufacturers; artists; bakers; bankers, banking; barrel makers, coopers; battle; cutlers, knife grinders, knife sharpeners; dying people; emergency medical technicians, EMTs, paramedics; fencers; fencing; Greek Air Force; greengrocers; grocers; Guild of Tanners and Weavers of Barcelona, Spain; haberdashers; hatmakers, hatters, cap makers; holy death; knights; mariners, sailors, watermen; boatmen; milliners; paratroopers; police officers; radiologists (proclaimed on 15 January 1941 by Pope Pius XII); radiotherapists; scale makers; security guards; sick people; soldiers; Spanish police officers; storms at sea; swordsmiths. See [CatholicSaints.info](http://CatholicSaints.info) for a whole list.

**Symbols and Representation:** Angel with wings; dressed in armour; lance and shield; scales; shown weighing souls; millstone; piercing dragon or devil; banner charged with a dove; symbolic colours orange or gold.

### St. Gabriel

St. Gabriel's name means "God is my strength." Biblically he appears three times as a messenger. He had been sent to Daniel to explain a vision concerning the Messiah. He appeared to Zachary when he was offering incense in the Temple, to foretell the birth of his son, St. John the Baptist. St. Gabriel is most known as the angel chosen by God to be the messenger of the Annunciation, to announce to mankind the mystery of the Incarnation.



The angel's salutation to our Lady, so simple and yet so full of meaning, *Hail Mary, full of grace*, has become the constant and familiar prayer of all Christian people.

**Patronage:** Ambassadors; broadcasting; childbirth; clergy; communications; diplomats; messengers; philatelists; postal workers; public relations; radio workers; secular clergy; stamp collectors; telecommunications; Portugal; Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington.

**Symbols and Representation:** Archangel; sceptre and lily; MR or AM shield; lantern; mirror; olive branch; scroll with words *Ave Maria Gratia Plena*; Resurrection trumpet; shield; spear; lily; symbolic colours, silver or blue.

### **St. Raphael**



Our knowledge of the Archangel Raphael comes to us from the book of Tobit. His mission as wonderful healer and fellow traveller with the youthful Tobias has caused him to be invoked for journeys and at critical moments in life.

Tradition also holds that Raphael is the angel that stirred the waters at the healing sheep pool in Bethesda. His name means "God has healed."

**Patronage:** Blind; bodily ills; counsellors; druggists; eye problems; guardian angels; happy meetings; healers; health inspectors; health technicians; love; lovers; mental illness; nurses; pharmacists; physicians; shepherds; against sickness; therapists; travelers; young people; young people leaving

home for the first time; Archdiocese of Dubuque, Iowa; Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington.

**Symbols and Representation:** Staff; wallet and fish; staff and gourd; archangel; young man carrying a staff; young man carrying a fish; walking with Tobias; holding a bottle or flask; symbolic colours, grey or yellow.

Here is a **prayer to our Guardian Angel:**

- ["Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day \(or night\) be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.](#)





**Blessed Carlo Acutis** lived a life of heroic holiness, despite only living to age 15. He loved to code and even built a website tracking Eucharistic miracles. Bl. Carlo is an example of how to live out holiness in the modern world.

Early Life.. Carlo Acutis was born in London in 1991, before his family soon settled in Milan, Italy. He received his First Communion at the age of 7 and became a frequent communicant.

He made it a priority to visit Jesus in the tabernacle along with going to confession every week. His [mother said](#): “As a little boy, especially after his First Communion, he never missed his daily appointment with the Holy Mass and the Rosary, followed by a moment of Eucharistic adoration.”

In his own family, he was the one who helped convince his family to go to Mass more often.

At school, he defended other kids against bullies. When one of his friend’s parents were getting divorced, [he made a special effort to include him](#) in his own family life.



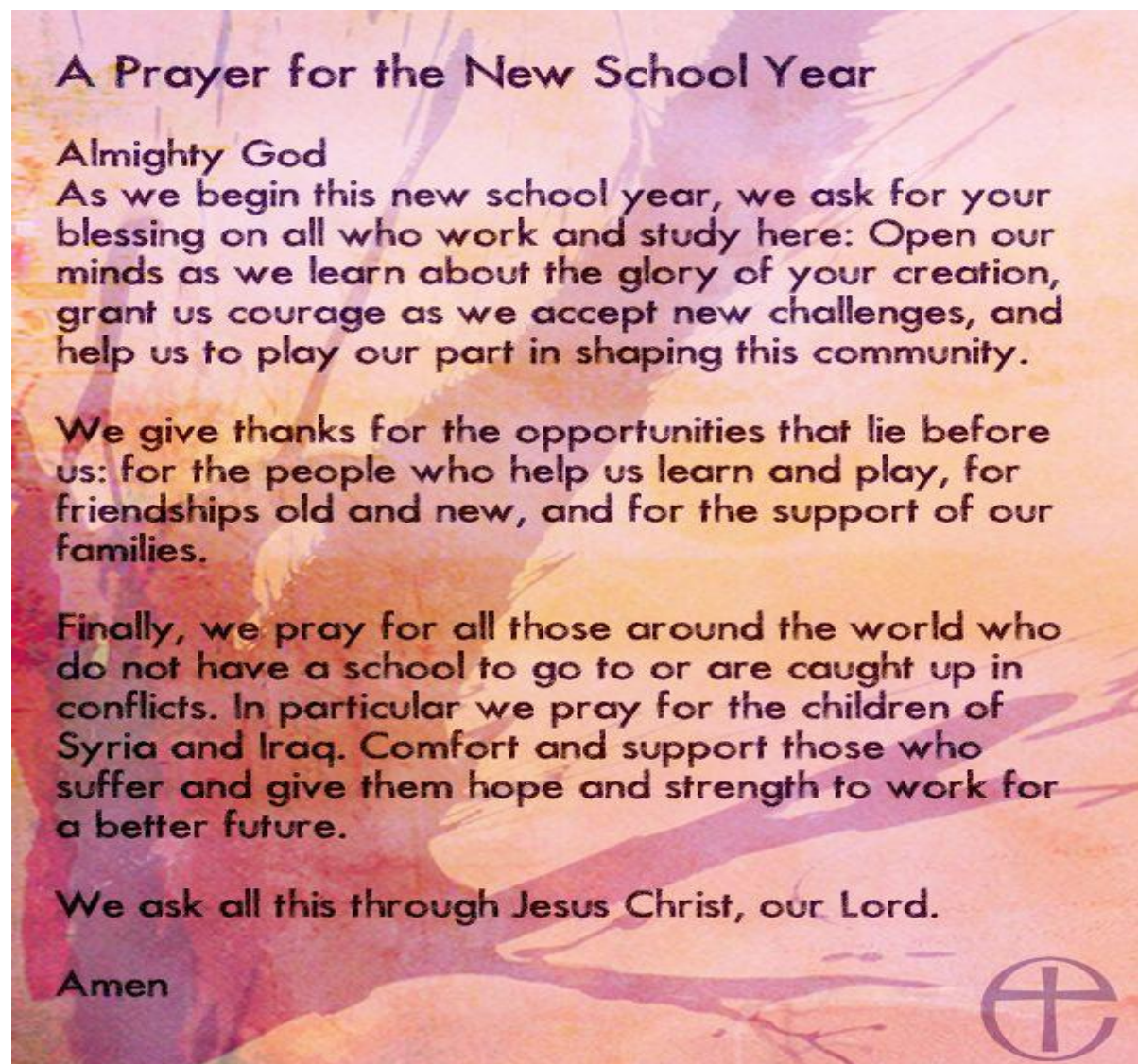
Bl. Carlo Acutis

Along with his holiness, Bl. Carlo was a normal kid. He loved to hang out with friends, play video games (only one hour per week as a penance), and play soccer.

Leukemia Diagnosis At the age of 15, he contracted leukemia. He chose to offer his suffering for Pope Benedict XVI and the Church. When a doctor asked him about the pain, he responded: "There are people who suffer much more than me!"

In his last months, he chose to make a website to categorize every Eucharistic miracle in the Church, all 136 of them. Bl. Carlo Acutis shows a path toward holiness in the modern world: a love for the Eucharist and a life for God: "To always be close to Jesus, that's my life plan."

Perhaps you can place Carlos' life story before your students and lead them to reflect on what is their plan in life.



**A Prayer for the New School Year**


**Almighty God**  
As we begin this new school year, we ask for your blessing on all who work and study here: Open our minds as we learn about the glory of your creation, grant us courage as we accept new challenges, and help us to play our part in shaping this community.

We give thanks for the opportunities that lie before us: for the people who help us learn and play, for friendships old and new, and for the support of our families.

Finally, we pray for all those around the world who do not have a school to go to or are caught up in conflicts. In particular we pray for the children of Syria and Iraq. Comfort and support those who suffer and give them hope and strength to work for a better future.

We ask all this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen





*To conclude - As we begin a New School Year:*

*We would like to wish you and all of our Principals /Deputy Principals together with the school communities the very best for 2024/2025.*

*We hope this year will be a time of continued growth for staff and students.*

*May this academic year be full of joy and God's blessings. May it be a year - expecting, hoping and trusting in the future and what it holds for us.*

*Please be assured of our prayers as we participate in nurturing the seed of faith in our young people.*

*Let us together renew our belief in the Holy Spirit who gives each of us the power to do more than we can believe or dare to ask for. Amen*

*Sr. Bernadette / Sr. Concepta*

