

Saints and What They Represent

January 1: Mary Mother of God – Living Model of the Church.

January 2: Saint Basil the Great – Patron Saint of the Hospital Administrators & Saint Gregory Nazianzen – Patron Saint of Teachers.

January 3: the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

January 7: Saint Andre Bessette – [people came to seek out the “Miracle Man of Montreal”].

January 8: Saint Raymond of Penyafort – Patron Saint of Lawyers including Canon Lawyers.

January 12: Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys – Patron Saint of Poor People.

January 17: Saint Anthony – Well known for his holiness, wisdom and asceticism.

January 20: Saint Fabian, Pope – [His tombstone still can be seen in the catacomb of Saint Callixtus in Rome].

January 20: Saint Sebastian – Patron Saint of the Pope’s Swiss Guard & Patron Saint of Athletes and Soldiers.

January 21: Saint Agnes – Patron Saint of Girls, Engaged Couples and Gardeners.

January 22: Saint Vincent – Patron Saint of Wine Producers, Sailors and Brick makers.

January 24: Saint Francis de Sales – Patron Saint of Writers and Journalists.

January 25: Conversion of Saint Paul – [His 13 Letters offer us a Window into the early Church].

January 26: Saints Timothy & Titus – Timothy is the Patron Saint of Stomach and Intestinal Disorders and Titus is the Patron of Saint of Crete.

January 27: Saint Angela Merici – Patron Saint of those who have lost Parents, who are sick and who are Physically Challenged.

January 28: Saint Thomas Aquinas – Patron Saint of Universities and Schools. [His classmates called him “dumb ox”].

January 31: Saint John Bosco.

February 2: Presentation of Our Lord – Blessing Candles and holding a Procession of light on this day. This feast is known as Candlemas: Christ Our Light has come to us.

February 3: Saint Blaise – Patron of wild beasts, as legend suggests he had a remarkable calming influence on animals. St. Blaise has long been associated with cures for afflictions of the throat and blessing of throat in memory of him.

February 3: Saint Ansgar – known as the Apostle of the North and greatly venerated for his charity and sanctity.

February 5: Saint Agatha – Patron of miners, alpine guides and nurses.

February 6: Saint Paul Miki and Companions – He is the Patron Saint of Japan.

February 8: Saint Jerome Emiliani – Patron of orphans and abandoned children.

February 8: Saint Josephine Bakhita – Patron of the country of Sudan and the first Saint from Sudan.

February 10: Saint Scholastica – Patron of nuns and convulsive children. She was twin sister of Saint Benedict.

February 11: Our Lady of Lourdes.

February 14: Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius – Patrons of Europe.

February 17: Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order – one of the early recruits to this order was Peregrine Laziosi, the Patron Saint of persons with serious illnesses.

February 21: Saint Peter Damian.

February 22: Chair of Saint Peter – *Cathedra* literally means the seat of the bishop and is the symbol of his authority and of his magisterium.

February 23: Saint Polycarp – Patron of those suffering from earaches.

March 4: Saint Casimir – Patron of Saint of Lithuania and one of the Patrons of Poland.

March 7: Saint Perpetua – a noble lady and Saint Felicity – a slave martyred by the Emperor Severus in Carthage in March 7, 203.

March 8: Saint John of God – Patron of hospitals and the sick.

March 9: Saint Frances of Rome – Patron of widows.

March 17: Saint Patrick – Patron of Ireland and Nigeria, of engineers, of several Canadian dioceses and of those who fear snakes.

March 18: Saint Cyril of Jerusalem.

March 19: Saint Joseph – Patron of the Universal Church since 1870 and Principal Patron of Canada.

March 23: Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo – Patron of Latin American Bishops.

March 25: The Annunciation of the Lord.

April 2: Saint Francis of Paola – Patron of Seafarers.

April 4: Saint Isidore – declared Doctor of the Church in 1722.

April 5: Saint Vincent Ferrer.

April 7: Saint John Baptist de la Salle – Patron of Teachers.

April 11: Saint Stanislaus – one of the Patrons of Poland.

April 13: Saint Martin I – last Pope to be martyred.

April 17: Saint Kateri Tekakwitha – Patron of Ecology, those who have lost their parents and World Youth Day.

April 18: Blessed Marie-Anne Blondin.

April 21: Saint Anselm – declared Doctor of the Church in 1720.

April 23: Saint George – in the Middle Ages, a popular Patron of Knights, Soldiers and Crusaders who adopted what was called St. George's Arms, a red cross on the white background. The red cross appears on the modern Union Jack.

April 23: Saint Adalbert – Dubbed the Apostle of the Slavs.

April 24: Saint Fidelis of Sigmaringen – Patron of Lawyers.

April 25: Saint Mark – Patron of Notaries, of Egypt and Venice.

April 26: Our Lady of Good Counsel – Patron of many women's groups including the Catholic Women's League of Canada.

April 28: Saint Peter Chanel.

April 28: Saint Louis Grignon de Montfort.

April 29: Saint Catherine of Siena – Patron of Italy, declared Doctor of the Church in 1970. With St. Bridget of Sweden and St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, she is Co-Patron of Europe.

April 30: Saint Marie of the Incarnation – composed catechisms in Huron and Algonquin, dictionary of French and Algonquin, died in Quebec in 1672, beatified in 1980, canonized in 2014.

April 30: Saint Pius V.

May 1: Saint Joseph the Worker – which is also the Labor Day in many countries.

May 2: Saint Athanasius – one of our greatest teachers.

May 3: Saint Philip and Saint James – both Patrons of Hatters. St. Philip, Patron of Pastry Chefs, while St. James, Patron of Druggists.

May 4: Blessed Marie-Léonie Paradis.

May 6: Saint François de Laval – his well deserved title is “Père de la Patrie = Father of the Homeland”.

May 8: Blessed Catherine of St. Augustine – Counted among the founders of the Canadian Church, beatified in 1989.

May 12: Saint Nereus and Saint Achilleus.

May 12: Saint Pancras – Patron of Children and Adolescents.

May 13: Our Lady of Fatima – known for “three secrets.”

May 14: Saint Matthias – replaced Judas Iscariot.

May 18: Saint John I – Pope.

May 20: Saint Bernardine of Siena.

May 21: Saint Eugène de Mazenod.

May 22: Saint Rita of Cascia – Patron of Impossible Causes.

May 24: Blessed Louis-Zéphirin Moreau.

May 25: Saint Bede the Venerable – His wisdom and learning earned him the title “Venerable”.

May 25: Saint Gregory VII – Pope.

May 25: Saint Mary Magdalene de’Pazzi.

May 26: Saint Philip Neri – Patron of Home Missions, supported in Canada through the Catholic Missions in Canada.

May 27: Saint Augustine of Canterbury.

May 31: Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary – to Elizabeth her cousin – *Magnificat*.

June 1: Saint Justin – His writings include one of the earliest descriptions the Mass.

June 2: Saint Marcellinus & Saint Peter.

June 3: Saint Charles Lwanga & Companions.

June 5: Saint Boniface – He is called the “Apostle of Germany”.

June 6: Saint Norbert.

June 9: Saint Ephraim – Recognizing the power of music and poetry to evangelize, he was the first to introduce hymns into public worship. He was called the “Harp of the Holy Spirit. In 1920, he became the Doctor of the Church.

June 11: Saint Barnabas – His name means “man of encouragement”.

June 12: Most Sacred Heart of Jesus – in 1899, Pope Leo XIII consecrated the world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

June 13: Saint Anthony of Padua – His aid is invoked to help find lost objects.

June 13: Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Popes have on numerous occasions consecrated the whole world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

June 19: Saint Romuald.

June 21: Saint Aloysius Gonzaga.

June 22: Saint Paulinus of Nola – He was held in esteem by many of the great saints of the period: Ambrose was his friend and he corresponded with Augustine, Martin of Tours and Jerome.

June 22: Saint John Fisher – He, Erasmus and Saint [Sir] Thomas More became great friends. Henry VIII beheaded John and Thomas More.

June 22: Saint Thomas More – Nine days after the death of John Fisher, Sir Thomas More met the same death at the age of 57, claiming to be “the King’s good servant, but God’s first”. He is a patron of lawyers, statesmen and politicians.

June 24: Nativity of Saint John the Baptist.

June 27: Blessed Nykyta Budka & Blessed Vasyl Velychkowsky.

June 27: Saint Cyril of Alexandria – In 1882, he was declared a Doctor of the Church.

June 28: Saint Irenaeus – Perhaps his most important contribution was his assertion that creation is not sinful by nature, but rather distorted by sin.

June 29: Saint Peter & Saint Paul – Peter was indeed the “chief of the Apostles”. From the middle of the 3rd century onward, documents show that the bishops of Rome were recognized as the successors of Peter. Paul called himself the “Apostle of the Gentiles”.

June 30: First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church – This day is dedicated to the Christians martyred under the Emperor Nero. In the year 64, a great fire broke out in Rome. When suspicion fell on Nero, he accused Christians of having set the fire. The historian Tacitus wrote that no one believed this.

July 3: Saint Thomas – Patron Saint of Builders and of India and Pakistan.

July 4: Saint Elizabeth of Portugal – Patron of Catholic Charities.

July 5: Saint Anthony Zaccaria.

July 6: Saint Maria Goretti – When she was 12, she rebuffed the advances of an 18-year old neighbor, Alessandro who stabbed her several times because of her refusal. She died at 12, having forgiven him. He was sentenced to 30 years in prison. After his release, her mother forgave him. Both he and Maria's family lived to see her canonized in 1950 by Pope Pius XII for her defence of Christian Virtue.

July 9: Saint Augustine Zhao Rong and Companions.

July 11: Saint Benedict – He is considered the Patriarch of western Monasticism and was proclaimed a Patron of Europe in 1964 by Pope Paul VI.

July 15: Saint Bonaventure.

July 16: Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

July 20: Saint Apollinaris.

July 21: Saint Lawrence of Brindisi – Doctor of the Church.

July 22: Saint Mary Magdalene – Patron of the Order of Preachers [Dominicans].

July 23: Saint Bridget – Patron of Sweden and co-patron of Europe, with Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

July 24: Saint Sharbel Makhlof.

July 25: Saint James – Patron Saint of Spain and of pilgrims. In northwestern Spain he is venerated at Santiago [Saint James] de Compostela, a famous mediaeval pilgrimage destination.

July 26: Saint Anne & Saint Joachim.

July 29: Saint Martha – Patron of domestic workers and cooks.

July 30: Saint Peter Chrysologus – a Doctor of the Church in 1729.

July 31: Saint Ignatius of Loyola – an universal Patron of retreats and soldiers.

August 1: Saint Alphonsus Mary Liguori - He is a Doctor of the Church and a Patron of moral theologians and confessors.

August 2: Saint Eusebius of Vercelli - died in 371. A manuscript copy of the Gospels said to be written in his hand can still be seen at the cathedral of Vercelli.

August 2: Saint Peter Julian Eymard - died on August 1, 1868. He is considered a pioneer in the rediscovery of the importance of the "bread of life" and in his call to involve laypersons more actively in the life of the Church.

August 4: Saint John Mary Vianney - Patron of parish priests.

August 5: Saint Frederic Janssoone.

August 5: Dedication of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major - older and larger than other churches in Rome and dedicated to our Lady.

August 6: Transfiguration of the Lord - this day coincides with the anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945 and on Nagasaki three days later.

August 7: Saint Sixtus II and Companions.

August 7: Saint Cajetan - gained a reputation as a saint during his lifetime.

August 8: Saint Dominic - Patron of Dominican Republic, astronomers, scientists and the falsely accused.

August 9: Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross- her name was Edith Stein youngest child in a large Jewish family. She is co-Patron of Europe with saints Benedict, Cyril and Methodius, Bridget of Sweden, and Catherine of Siena.

August 10: Saint Lawrence - Roman martyr of the early Church and is a patron of Rome.

August 11: Saint Clare - She was abbess for 40 years. She also received papal approval for her own Rule the day before she died - the first Rule for religious life written by a woman for women. She wanted her community to have a radical poverty.

August 12: Saint Jane Frances de Chantal - She established 85 monasteries.

August 13: Saint Pontian & Saint Hippolytus.

August 14: Saint Maximilian Kolbe - He arrested by Gestapo in 1941 and imprisoned in Auschwitz. A young father escaped and Maximilian offered to take his place.

August 15: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - feast began after the Council of Ephesus in 431. By the 6th c. the feast celebrated Mary's Dormition, her 'falling asleep,' meaning her death.

August 16: Saint Stephen of Hungary.

August 19: Saint John Eudes - In the decree of his beatification in 1908, Pope Pius X declared John Eudes to be the father, doctor and apostle of the devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

August 20: Saint Bernard - When he died, Europe mourned and was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1830.

August 21: Saint Pius X - His recommendations and encyclicals reflect his pastoral background: he advocated frequent communion for adults, sacramental preparation for children and instruction in catechism for everyone. He wrote an encyclical condemning modernism in all its manifestations.

August 22: Queenship of Blessed Virgin Mary - In 1954 Pius XII instituted this memorial "so that all may clearly recognize and more zealously venerate the kind and maternal rule of the Mother of God."

August 23: Saint Rose of Lima - She endured interior periods of darkness and desolation as well as mystical experiences.

August 24: Saint Bartholomew - Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke and the Acts of the Apostles count Bartholomew as one of the 12 apostles, associating his name with Philip. John's Gospel links the name Nathaniel with Philip and never mentions Bartholomew. Some scholars identify the apostle Bartholomew with Nathaniel, a solution supported by the fact that Bartholomew could be a surname [bar Tolomai = son of Tolomai] and Nathaniel a given name: Nathaniel Bartholomew. If so, then Nathaniel was the man in whom Jesus saw 'no guile'.

August 25: Saint Louis - Patron of masons and sculptors.

August 25: Saint Joseph Calasanz - Patron of schools serving the needs of poor children,

August 27: Saint Monica - Patron of Mothers.

August 28: Saint Augustine - His favourite themes include Grace, the Trinity, Scripture, History and the "Journey to the Mind of God." He is one of the greatest Fathers of the Church, known as the Doctor of Grace.

August 29: Passion of Saint John the Baptist.

September 2: Blessed André Grasset – born in Montreal in 1758.

September 3: Saint Gregory the Great – is known as the Apostle of England for sending missionaries there, including Augustine of Canterbury. He died in 604, is a Doctor of the Church.

September 4: Blessed Dina Bélanger – born in Quebec City on April 30, 1897 and she died on September 4, 1929 at the age of 32, promising her family and friends to be a “beggar of love in heaven.”

September 8: The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary – this feast originated in the Eastern Church and was commemorated in the West as early as the 5th Century. An occasion for praise and thanksgiving, the feast celebrates Mary's personal sanctity and vocation as the mother of Jesus.

September 9: Saint Peter Claver – the patron of Colombia and of all missions to black peoples.

September 12: Most Holy Name of Mary – Her name is one of honor, a holy name, a maternal name and a name responsive to the needs of the Church.

September 13: Saint John of Chrysostom – After his death, he received the title ‘Chrysostom’ [golden mouth] in tribute to his powerful preaching. He is patron of preachers.

September 14: Exaltation of the Holy Cross – Liturgical feast has been celebrated since early times. In the 4th c., two churches Jerusalem were dedicated to the cross on this day and occasion was commemorated annually. Adopted by the Church in Rome during the 7th c., the feast commemorates both the dedication of the original Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 335 and Christ’s Victory over death.

September 15: Our Lady of Sorrows – Formerly known as ‘Seven Sorrows of Mary’ instituted by the Servite Friars in 1668. In 1814, Pius VII extended the feast to the whole Western Church in commemoration of the sufferings he had endured during his captivity in France. The seven sorrows are: Simeon’s Prophecy at the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, the flight into Egypt, the disappearance of the boy Jesus in Jerusalem, the road to Calvary, the Crucifixion, the removal from the cross and the entombment.

September 16: Saint Cornelius & Saint Cyprian.

September 17: Saint Robert Bellarmine – declared a Doctor of the Church in 1931. He is a patron of catechists and catechumens.

September 19: Saint Januarius.

September 20: Saint Andrew Kim Tae-gon, Saint Paul Chong Ha-sang and Companions.

September 21: Saint Matthew – which means ‘gift of God’ in Aramaic. He is patron of customs officers and accountants.

September 23: Saint Pius of Pietrelcina – Padre Pio.

September 24: Blessed Émilie Tavernier-Gamelin – born in Montreal in 1800.

September 25: Saint Cosmas & Saint Damian – Along with the St. Luke the Evangelist, Cosmas and Damian are patron saints of physicians and surgeons.

September 27: Saint Vincent de Paul – Patron Saint of charitable societies.

September 28: Saint Wenceslaus.

September 28: Saint Lawrence Ruiz and Companions.

September 29: Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael – are three of seven archangels who stand before God and are venerated in both Jewish and Christian traditions. Michael [Who is like the Lord], considered the special protector of Israel (Dan: 12.1) and the Church, is known as the ‘captain of the heavenly host’ (Rev: 12.7-9); Gabriel [God is mighty] foretold the coming of Messiah to the prophet Daniel (Dan: 9); St. Luke records the appearances of Gabriel to Zachariah and to Mary of Nazareth (Lk: 1); Raphael [God heals] brings prayers before God (Tobit: 12); he is associated with the healing poor in Jerusalem (Jn: 5).

September 30: Saint Jerome – Doctor of the Church, patron of scripture scholars, translators, archeologists, librarians and students.

October 1: Saint Thérèse of Child Jesus – canonized in 1925 and made Doctor of the Church in 1997, patron of missions.

October 2: Holy Guardian Angels – angel comes from the Greek word for messenger.

October 4: Saint Francis of Assisi – Patron of Italy and ecologists.

October 6: Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher – born in St. Antoine, Quebec, beatified in 1982.

October 6: Saint Bruno.

October 7: Our Lady of the Rosary.

October 9: Saint Denis and companions – Patron saint of France.

October 14: Saint Callistus I.

October 15: Saint Teresa of Jesus – First woman to be declared a Doctor of the Church and patron of Spain.

October 16: Saint Marguerite d'Youville – born at Varennes, Quebec.

October 17: Saint Ignatius of Antioch – arrived in Rome in 107 and directly taken to the amphitheatre where lions devoured him.

October 18: Saint Luke – Patron of the medical profession.

October 19: Saint Paul of the Cross.

October 20: Saint Hedwig.

October 20: Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque – experienced four visions concerning Sacred Heart.

October 22: Dedication of Consecrated Churches – Consecrations usually take place on a Sunday or feast day.

October 23: Saint John of Capistrano – Patron of military chaplains.

October 24: Saint Anthony Mary Claret.

October 28: Saint Simon and Saint Jude – Jude became a patron saint of hopeless causes.

November 1: All Saints – Originally a feast in the Eastern Church for all martyrs, it was extended to the whole Roman Church in the 9th century as a feast including non-martyrs. It was given this date, November 1, to counter a pagan feast on the same day. In England it was called Allhallows [Hallow is from the Old English word for 'holy']. Thus 'halloween' a vestige of this pagan celebration, is from Allhallows even, or the eve of All Saints.

November 2: Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed – All Souls' Day – Since the early Church, Christians have prayed for the departed.

November 3: Saint Martin de Porres – Patron saint of barbers, innkeepers, public education, public health, racial harmony and social justice.

November 4: Saint Charles Borromeo – Patron of catechists and catechumens.

November 9: Dedication of the Lateran Basilica – Latin inscription reads *omnium ecclesiarum Urbis et Orbis mater et caput* [The Mother and Head of All Churches of the City and of the World].

November 10: Saint Leo the Great – Pope from 440 until his death in 461; the first Pope whose sermons and letters have been preserved in extensive collections. He was made Doctor of the church in 1754.

November 11: St. Martin of Tours – Patron of France, soldiers and vintners.

November 12: St. Josaphat – first Eastern saint to be formally canonized in 1867.

November 15: St. Albert the Great – Doctor of the Church in 1931 and patron saint of scientists.

November 16: St. Margaret of Scotland – Patron of Scotland in 1673.

November 16: St. Gertrude – although never officially canonized, her feast is in the general calendar of the Roman Rite.

November 17: St. Elizabeth of Hungary – Patron saint of the Franciscan Third Order and of Catholic Charities.

November 18: Dedication of the Basilicas of Saints Peter and Paul.

November 21: Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

November 22: St. Cecilia – Patron of musicians stemming from the story that at her wedding feast she sang to God in her heart. She is mentioned in the First Eucharistic Prayer.

November 23: St. Clement I – his fame rests in a letter he wrote to the Church of Corinth when Christians there revolted against their leaders. Intervening as bishop of Rome, he clearly expected obedience, as attitude that demonstrated the Primacy of Rome at an early date.

November 23: St. Columban.

November 24: St. Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions.

November 25: St. Catherine of Alexandria – Patron of Librarians, Teachers, Students, Jurists, Nurses, Unmarried Girls, Philosophers, the Dying, several other groups and those who work with wheels [potters, spinners, mechanics etc.].

November 30: St. Andrew – Patron of Scotland and Russia, of the Greek Church and of the Fishing Industry.

December 3: St. Francis Xavier – Patron of foreign missions.

December 4: St. John Damascene – Doctor of the Church in 1890.

December 6: St. Nicholas – many parts of the world, he still plays a role as Santa Claus.

December 7: St. Ambrose – His most famous student was St. Augustine of Hippo, whom he baptized. He was declared one of the four great doctors of the Latin Church with Jerome, Augustine and Gregory I.

December 8: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary – this feast dedicated to Mary's conception first appeared in the 7th c. and by the 12th c. it was firmly established in England. In the 13th c., great thinkers such as St. Bernard and St. Thomas Aquinas debated whether Mary could have been born without original sin if, as St. Paul says, all persons are born in sin [Rom, 5:12]. By the 19th c., the theological debate was resolved and in 1854 Pius IX defined the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as a dogma of faith. In 1846, the Catholic Church of the United States declared to be its paternal feast.

December 8, 2015: marks 50th anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council and Pope Francis declares the Jubilee of Mercy and concludes on November 20, 2016. There are 7 Holy Doors in the world. Four are in Rome, in each of the papal basilicas; one in France at the Shrine of St. John Vianney, the Curé of Ars; one at the Shrine of St. James in Compostela, Spain; one at Notre-Dame in Quebec, Canada, which is the only one outside of Europe.

December 9: St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin.

December 11: St. Damasus I – he commissioned St. Jerome to translate the Bible into Latin, a version known as Vulgate.

December 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe – in 1946 Pius XII named her a patron of the Americas.

December 13: St. Lucy – during the Middle Ages, people suffering from eye trouble began invoking Lucy's aid because her name is derived from lux [light]. She is also associated with festivals of light, especially in Scandinavia.

December 14: St. John of the Cross – proclaimed Doctor of the Church in 1926.

December 21: St. Peter Canisius – declared Doctor of the Church in 1925.

December 23: St. John Kanty.

December 26: St. Stephen – he is first-named among the seven deacons chosen to minister Greek-speaking Christians in Jerusalem at the very dawn of the Christian church. He is the first recorded martyr of the New Testament.

December 27: St. John – also known as John the Divine, the Apostle John was the son of Zebedee and the brother of James and a fisherman. He was very close to Jesus and is the "beloved disciple". John is believed to have died at Ephesus in extreme old age. In Christian iconography his symbol is the eagle.

December 27: Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph – devotion to the Holy Family flourished in the Renaissance. The leading artists of the time – Michelangelo, Raphael, El Greco, Rembrandt, Rubens, to name a few – often portrayed the Holy Family in their work.

December 28: Holy Innocents – The Holy Infants are the male children recorded slain by King Herod in Matthew's Gospel. This unique episode in Jesus' life is not found in any other document, secular or religious, yet this incident, along with the account of the flight into Egypt, presents the ancient tradition of the early Church: Jesus as the 'new Israel', persecuted and forced to flee and the 'new Moses', marvellously rescued from the slaughter of the Hebrew children. This fest also points to Jesus as the Messiah and foreshadows the secular opposition Jesus will later meet culminating in his Passion.

December 29: St. Thomas Becket.

December 31, St. Sylvester I – was the first Pope to be elected after the Edict of Milan (314) granted Christian religion recognition and freedom. He led the Church as bishop of Rome for almost 21 years. Huge basilicas were built during Sylvester's reign by Emperor Constantine and various other leaders. Sylvester was a strong defender of the Church against heresies. The first general council was held at Nicaea during his pontificate; the Nicene Creed was formulated at this council.

