

**CALENDAR OF LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS  
PROPER TO THE ORDER**

**Saints and Blessed of the Order of Malta**

Throughout the nine hundred years as a Religious Order, the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta has been blessed by our Patrons, Our Lady of Philerme and Saint John the Baptist and by the Saints and the Blessed of the Order.

20 February	Dedication of the Principal Church of the Order, Conventual Church of St. John the Baptist in Malta	Feast
22 March	Blessed Clemens August Cardinal von Galen	Memorial
1 April	Saint Nuno Alvarez Pereira	Memorial
18 May	Blessed Gerard Mecatti	Memorial
23 May	Blessed Vilmos Apor	Memorial
28 May	Saint Ubaldesca	Memorial
12 June	Saint Flora of Beaulieu	Memorial
19 June	Blessed Gerland	Memorial
24 June	Birthday of St. John the Baptist, Patron of the Order	Solemnity
1 July	Saint Nicasius	Memorial
8 July	Blessed Adrian Fortescue	Memorial
12 July	Blessed David Gunston	Memorial
14 July	Saint Toscana	Memorial
29 August	Martyrdom of St. John, the Baptist, Patron of the Order	Feast
30 August	Blessed Alfredo Ildefonso Schuster	Memorial
8 September	Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary venerated in the Order under the title of “Our Lady of Philerme”, Patron of the Order	Solemnity
23 September	Saints Zachary and Elizabeth, Parents of Saint John the Baptist	Memorial
26 September	St Paul VI	Memorial
5 October	Blessed Peter of Imola	Memorial
8 October	Saint Hugh	Memorial
11 October	Saint John XXIII	Memorial
13 October	Blessed Gerard, Founder and First Grand Master of the Order	Feast
21 October	Blessed Karl, Emperor of Austria	Memorial
19 November	All Saints of the Order	Memorial
2 December	Blessed Virgin Mary, Cause of Our Joy, venerated in the Order under the title of “Our Lady of Liesse”	Memorial

## THE “BLESSSED” AND THE “SAINTS”

Fra' James-Michael von Stroebel

Since the early days of Christianity, persons notable by a virtuous and pious life have been venerated as special witnesses of the Christian faith, as ‘saints’. They have been held as examples of how to live in order to attain the goal of heaven, and also as intercessors in heaven for those still on earth.

The veneration of saints is closely connected with the veneration of the early martyrs for the faith. In the fourth century, this idea of the holiness of martyrs was extended to include not only those who were killed for their faith, but also those who lived a life of ‘heroic virtue’, especially if that person’s ‘saintliness’ was confirmed posthumously by extraordinary signs or miracles.

During the first millennium, and even later, the Church had no established unified mechanism for recognizing a person’s saintliness. It was usual that persons considered to be ‘saints’ were declared as such by popular acclamation of the local Christian assembly, or by the person’s monastic community, and a prayer cult developed. This was often officially recognized or confirmed by the abbot or the local parish and diocese. The person so recognized was most often referred to as ‘blessed’, and sometimes as ‘saint’, but to the people, there was no difference in the meaning of the two words. They signified the same thing and did not indicate a difference in rank or degree of holiness. Indeed, Mary the mother of Jesus usually was, and still is, referred to as “Blessed”, only rarely as “Saint”.

This process was workable in the centuries when communications were slow or even nil, and when local communities were mostly isolated, but by the early part of the second millennium this totally unregulated system was resulting in a very disorganized and burgeoning martyrology. To bring some order out of this ancient chaotic system, and to prevent the exaggeration of veneration, the Church finally took control. In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII codified and centralized at the Vatican the system of recognizing the ‘saintliness’ of persons. That system, still in effect, established the progressive titles: servant of God, venerable, “blessed” and “saint” and the differences between them. The difference even today is mainly that the cult of those beatified as ‘blessed’ is for a local area or community, and the cult of those canonized as ‘saint’ [name added to the general canon of the Mass] is for the whole Church. However, this system was for the consideration of new candidates, and did not affect the thousands of ‘blessed’ and ‘saints’ so proclaimed during the preceding centuries.

The founder of the Fraternity of the Hospital of the Church of Saint John the Baptist at Jerusalem, Fra' Gerard, was proclaimed ‘blessed’ by his brethren and the multitude of persons whom he and his brethren had aided. To them, it meant that he was already in heaven, a ‘saint’, and could intercede for them. His cult has been perpetuated over nine centuries by the members of the order which he founded. During the several reviews by the Church of ancient saints and blessed, his name has not been suggested for removal. The situation of Blessed Raymond de Puy (sometimes “de Puis”), the first ‘master’ of the Order, is similar. The French historian Réné-Aubert, Sieur de Vertôt (1655-1735) remarked, “. . . the Hospitallers and indeed all the Latin Christians of the East, who had been witnesses of his virtues, anticipating his canonization revered him as of the number of the Blessed, a title which posterity confirmed to him.”

**20 February**



**Dedication of the Principal Church of the Order,  
Conventual Church of Saint John the Baptist, in Malta**

**Solemnity in the Church itself; Feast elsewhere.**

We remember on this day the dedication of the Church of St John the Baptist in Valletta on the Island of Malta. It was dedicated as the principal church of our Order, where through many generations the members of the Order joined fraternally and confraternally to worship the Holy Trinity, the Lord our God, to venerate Our Lady the Immaculate Mother of God under the title of Our Lady of Philerme, and to seek her intercession as well as the intercession of all the saints, most especially of all our brothers, sisters, confrères, chaplains, supporters, and associates who have joined our founder, Blessed Fra' Gerard, in his community in heaven.

Let this day remind all of us of our close continuing ties in Christian love with the living, the future, and the deceased members of our Order.

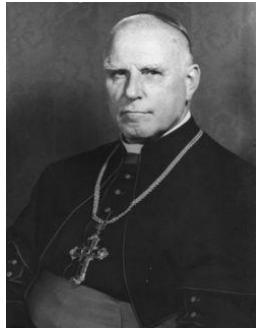
**Collect**

Lord our God, every year you renew the day when your holy temple was consecrated:  
listen to the prayers of your people,  
that you may ever receive here a pure worship  
and that we may receive the fullness of redemption.

We ask this through our lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen

**22 March**



**Blessed Clemens August Cardinal von Galen  
Bishop and Bailiff Grand Cross of the Order**

**Memorial**

Clemens August, Count von Galen, was born in 1878 in Oldenburg, Germany the eleventh of thirteen children in a deeply religious family. He was ordained in 1904 and did pastoral work in Münster and Berlin, where he lived through the difficult times of the First World War, the troubled post-war period, and a great part of the Weimar Republic.

In 1929 he was called back to Münster and in 1933 made Bishop there. Already in his first Lenten pastoral letter in 1934 he exposed the neo-heathen ideology of the Nazis (National Socialists) who had taken power. He was one of the bishops whom Pope Pius XI in 1937 called to help prepare the encyclical “With Burning Anxiety” against the racial doctrine of the Nazis.

In 1941 the Nazi leadership advised Hitler to assassinate Bishop Galen. They feared doing so, but in his place 37 priests were sent to concentration camps, of whom 10 lost their lives. In the troubled post-war period he instilled new courage into many.

In February 1946 Pope Pius XII elevated him to Cardinal for his fearless resistance against Nazism. He died on 22 March 1946, known by all as “The Lion of Münster”

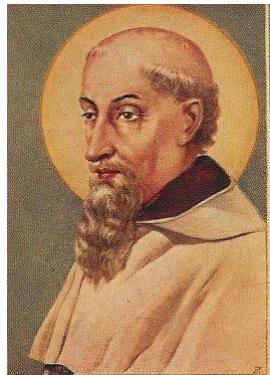
He chose as his episcopal motto: “*Nec laudibus nec timore*”. Often translated as: “Unconcerned about praise, unaffected by fear”.

Blessed Clemens August, we pray your intercession that all members of our Order may find inspiration in your motto.

**Collect**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
as Bishop your servant Clemens August  
fearlessly defended your honour, the faith of the Church  
and the life of the weak;  
by his intercession grant that  
we will serve you always with all our heart  
and love all mankind as you love them.  
Through Jesus Christ.  
Amen

**1 April**



**Saint Nuno de Santa Maria Alvares Pereira  
Religious and Prior of the Order**

**Memorial**

Nonius Alvarez Pereira, a cousin of the founder of the Braganza family, was born at Santares, Portugal on 24th July 1360. He was constable of the kingdom of Portugal, a famous Knight and Prior of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. Afterwards he left everything and became a lay-brother in the Carmelite Order, where he was remarkable for his devotion to Our Lady and humbly undertook the meanest duties of the friary. He had no hesitation about begging alms from door to door and was outstandingly generous and charitable towards the poor. He died on Easter Sunday, 1st April 1431.

**Collect**

God, who called blessed Nonius to lay down the weapons of this world  
and follow Christ under the protection of the Blessed Virgin,  
grant through the intercession of this former member of our Order  
that we too may deny ourselves and cling to you with all our hearts.  
Through the same Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**18 May**



**Blessed Gerard Mecatti, Religious of the Order**

### **Memorial**

Blessed Gerard was born at Villamagna near Florence about 1174. Loyally he followed his feudal lord to Palestine for the defence of Christendom, and there became a 'serving brother' in the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. After returning home, he met Saint Francis of Assisi and from his hands received the habit of the Friars Minor. However, he did not leave the Order of Saint John and all his life he continued to wear the white Cross of the Order on his habit. He lived as a hermit in penance and prayer. On his deathbed he asked for some cherries. Although it was much too early in the season, a good sister went to look and found in a small enclosure a cherry tree full of ripe fruit as fresh as in June. He died about 1245. Although the exact date of his death is uncertain, his memorial is kept every year on 18 May at Villamagna, where his body is.

### **Collect**

O God, who called Blessed Gerard, like your own son,  
to intense striving in the wilderness,  
strengthen us by penance and prayer  
and make us fitter for our Christian duties.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,  
for ever and ever.

Amen.

**23 May**



**Blessed Vilmos Apor, Bishop and Martyr, Chaplain of the Order**

Memorial

Vilmos (William) Apor, born 1892, was a Hungarian bishop who earned a special reputation for his service to the poor, especially during the months of hardship that came at the end of World War II. Named Bishop of Gyor in 1941, he chose as his motto: "The Cross strengthens the weak and makes the strong gentle." During the many air raids, he opened his home to those whose houses had been destroyed. When Russian troops entered the city in 1945, many women including religious took refuge in his episcopal residence. On Good Friday 1945 three Russian soldiers came to the residence and demanded that the women be taken to their barracks. Bishop Apor refused and placed himself in front of the women. One of the Russians shot and wounded him. Out of fear they then fled, leaving the women unmolested. Bishop Apor lived in great agony for three days and died on 2 April, Easter Monday.

**Collect**

Almighty and Eternal God,  
through your grace, Bishop William,  
by courageously shedding his blood for his flock,  
earned a martyr's crown.

Grant that we, despite the difficulties of our daily lives,  
may do your will and offer our good works  
for the salvation of our brothers and sisters.  
We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

**28 May**



**Saint Ubaldesca, Virgin of the Order**

**Memorial**

She was born in 1136 at Calcinia, near Pisa (Italy). At the age of fifteen, she joined the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, and worked for fifty-five years in the infirmary attached to the monastery at Pisa, caring for her neighbour out of love for God. She died on 28 May 1206. Her body was taken back to Calcinia where it is now enshrined. Not only honoured among the saints and blessed of The Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. She is celebrated also as a patroness of the City of Pisa.

**Collect**

O God, pride of the humble and lover of virginity,  
you called Saint Ubaldesca to the religious life  
in the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem:  
Grant that through her prayers and example  
we may rejoice in being humble  
and follow you with pure minds.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**12 June**



**Saint Fleur of Beaulieu, Virgin of the Order**

**Memorial**

Saint Fleur (Flora) was born about 1300 at Maurs in France. At the age of thirteen she took the veil in the convent of the Sisters of St John of Jerusalem at Beaulieu, in the diocese of Cahors (France), where she devoted herself to tending the poor and the sick in the hospital attached to the convent. She sublimated distractions and temptations in the love of God and in mystical experiences. She had a special devotion to Christ Crucified, to Our Lady of the Annunciation, and to Saint John the Baptist, the patron of the Order of Saint John. She died in 1347 and her relics are still in the church at Issendolus in the Diocese of Cahors.

**Collect**

Almighty and merciful God,  
who wished blessed Fleur to love and live as a virgin  
in the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem,  
grant that, following her example,  
we also may love you more and more.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**19 June**



**Blessed Gerland, Religious of the Order**

**Memorial**

It is not known for certain whether he came from Poland or the Germanic areas of Europe, but he was certainly a Knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. At the time of Emperor Frederick II, he served in a little church at Caltagirone in Sicily, caring for widows and orphans, devotedly and without thought for himself. He died about 1271 and is still honoured at Caltagirone, where his relics are venerated in the Basilica of San Giacomo.

**Collect**

Lord God,  
who brought Blessed Gerland from the north to Sicily  
and inspired him to wear a hair shirt  
in place of the armour of the knights of our Order,  
arouse in us a zeal like his  
so that our lives may always aim at perfection.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever.  
Amen.

24 June



**Birthday of Saint John the Baptist, Patron of the Order**

**Solemnity**

The Bull of Pope Paschal II dated 15 Feb 1113 approved the institution of “the fraternity of The Hospital of Saint John at Jerusalem”. This was understood by those involved to be Saint John the Baptist. If one wanted a patron, one wanted a powerful one, and Saint John the Baptist was about as close to the Lord as one could get. He was the epitome of obedience, poverty, self-sacrifice, humility, and dedication to serving others. He suffered much in guiding the people in the path of the Lord, and suffered martyrdom for his efforts: certainly a defender of the faith.

*Through the intercession of our Patron, Saint John the Baptist,  
we pray for all those, who, in the name of the Order,  
bring help to the afflicted and mercifully assist their brethren  
in sickness, hunger, poverty, and ignorance:  
that God may always enlighten them, protect them,  
console them in adversity and grant that their works of charity  
may bear much fruit in his sight.*

**Collect**

God our Father,  
you raised up John the Baptist  
to prepare a perfect people for Christ the Lord.  
Give your Church joy in spirit and guide those who believe in you  
into the way of salvation and peace.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
Who lives and reigns with you and  
the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**1 July**



**Saint Nicasius, Martyr of the Order**

**Memorial**

Nicasius was the grandson of one of the last emirs of Sicily, who had been converted by Roger of Normandy (or perhaps converted because of Roger). Nicasius was born about 1135 in Sicily, possibly in Palermo, into the Kameti family, later known as 'de Burgo'. He joined the Order of Saint John as a knight, as did his brother Ferrandino. They answered the call of Roger des Moulins and travelled to the Holy Land where Nicasius was martyred in 1187. He fought in the great siege of Acre (1187-1191). According to one tradition he was captured there and beheaded with many others, including his brother Ferrandino. According to another tradition, he was captured during the disastrous battle of The Horns of Hattin and was decapitated in the presence of Saladin after refusing to convert to Islam.

**Collect**

O God, every year you give us joy  
in the commemoration of your martyr, blessed Nicasius:  
Grant that through his prayers and example  
the companions of our Order may grow in faith  
and always follow you with all their hearts.  
Amen.

8 July



## Blessed Adrian Fortescue, Martyr of the Order

## Memorial

Adrian Fortescue was born around 1480, the son of Sir John Fortescue of Punsbourne, Hertfordshire, England. A cousin of Anne Boleyn, he was made a Knight of the Bath in 1503 and was held in favour by King Henry VIII, taking part in the Wars of England against France in 1513 and 1523. Widowed once and married twice, he had seven children. In 1532 he was received as a Knight of Devotion into the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and very recently (1530) of Malta. In 1539 he was attainted of High Treason without trial by an act of Parliament which condemned fifty persons who opposed the ecclesiastical policies Henry VIII. He was beheaded on Tower Hill, London, on 9 July, together with The Venerable Sir Thomas Dingley, a Knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem.

The Order of Saint John of Jerusalem has considered Sir Adrian to be a martyr of the Order, and has promoted devotion to him at least since the early seventeenth century. Pope Leo XIII declared him Blessed on 13 May 1895.

## Collect

O God, since all things are within your power,  
grant through the prayers of blessed Adrian, your martyr,  
that we who keep his feast today  
may become stronger in the love of your name  
and hold to your holy Church even at the cost of our lives.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**12 July**



**Blessed David Gunston, Martyr of the Order**

**Memorial**

Sir David Gunston was a member of an English naval family and was received into the Order at the English Auberge in Malta in 1533. He served on the ships of the Order in the Mediterranean until 1540, when he returned to England. Henry VIII had suppressed the Order by an Act of Parliament in 1540. David Gunston was imprisoned in the Tower of London and condemned to death in 1541 for denying the authority of the King in spiritual matters. He was hanged, drawn and quartered at Southwark in July 1541. Pope Pius XI declared him blessed in December 1929.

**Collect**

GOD, who made of blessed David  
a notable champion of the Catholic faith and  
whose martyrdom shed glory on our Order,  
grant that he may stimulate us  
to defend the unity of your holy Church.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

**14 July**



**Saint Toscana, Religious of the Order**

**Memorial**

She was born about 1280 at Zevio, near Verona, in Italy. She married a man from Verona, Albert Canoculi, with whom she began to do remarkable work for the poor. After her husband's early death, she sold all that she owned and gave to the poor. She spent her days in prayer and contemplation, and corporal works of mercy. Every morning she visited Verona's Hospice of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem to visit the sick and the poor and to wash their feet. She received the habit of the Hospitaller Sisters of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, and devoted the rest of her life to prayer and caring for the sick within the Order. She died on 14 July 1343 or 1344.

**Collect**

O God, who kept your servant Toscana  
unscathed by the turbulence of this world  
both as wife and as widow,  
and made her the instrument in our Order  
of a remarkable work of charity for the poor,  
grant us the grace of serving you as she did  
and of pleasing you by our faith and by our actions.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**29 August**



**Martyrdom of Saint John the Baptist  
Patron of the Order**

**Feast**

King Herod had married Herodias, wife of his brother, Philip. At great risk, John the Baptist preached that this was in violation of Jewish law, which Herod was bound to obey even though he was king. Herodias resented this greatly. Herod feared John as a righteous man but respected him and kept him in protective custody. But Saint John finally was martyred at the behest of Herodias.

**Collect**

God our Father,  
you called John the Baptist to be the herald  
of your Son's birth and death.

As he gave his life in witness to truth and justice,  
so may we strive to profess our faith in your Gospel.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

**30 August**



**Blessed Alfredo Ildefonso Cardinal Schuster, OSB  
Bishop and Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion of the Order**

**Memorial**

was born in Rome of Bavarian parents on 18 January 1880 and was baptized Alfredo Ludovico Luigi. He entered the Benedictine monastery of St Paul-Outside-the-Walls when he was 11, and in 1896 began his novitiate, taking the name of Ildefonso. He made his solemn profession in 1902. After studying philosophy at Sant' Anselmo (Rome) and theology at St Paul's Abbey, he was ordained a priest in 1904. He was appointed Archbishop of Milan by Pope Pius XI on 26 June 1929 and created a Cardinal on 15 July. In 1933 he was invested Bailiff in the Order of Malta. A few days before he died, he withdrew to Venegono Seminary. His last, moving words were to the seminarians: "You want something to remember me by. All I can leave you is an invitation to holiness...".

He died a few days later on 30 August 1954. His cause for canonization was introduced in 1957 by his successor, Archbishop Giovanni Battista Montini, the future Pope Paul VI. When his tomb was opened on 28 January 1985, his body was found to be intact. He was beatified on 12 May 1996.

**Collect**

Almighty God, through your grace,  
Blessed Alfredo Ildefonso,  
by his exemplary virtue built up the flock entrusted to him.  
Grant that we, under the guidance of the Gospel,  
may follow his teaching and walk in sureness of life,  
until we come to see you face to face in your eternal kingdom.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen

**8 September**



**Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary, venerated in the Order under the of “Our Lady of Philerme”, Patroness of the Order**

**Solemnity**

In 1306 the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem bought and occupied the Island of Rhodes. On Mount Philerme in Rhodes there were the remains of a Byzantine church. It had housed a “miraculous” pilgrimage icon of the Blessed Mother, which pious tradition accredited to having been painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist and having been brought from Jerusalem. The Knights of Saint John built a basilica on the spot and reinstated the icon, which was venerated as “Our Lady of All Mercies” and became known near and far as “Our Lady of Philerme”. Since then the Order has been devoted to Our Lady under that title as its protector and patroness.

In 1530 the Order moved to Malta and the icon was placed in the church of Saint Lawrence, which soon was badly damaged by fire, but the icon was unscathed. On 19 May 1565 Suleiman began the great Ottoman siege of Malta. Although greatly outnumbered, the Order withstood the attacks. A relief army landed on Malta and the next day, 8 September, the Feast of Our Lady of Philerme, the Turks fled.

After Bonaparte captured Malta in 1798, the Order took away the icon of Our Lady of Philerme which came under the protection of the Russian Tsars. It was saved from the 1917 revolution, and in 1919 was taken to Copenhagen. In 1931 it was taken to Yugoslavia and placed under the protection of the king. When the country was invaded in 1941, the icon was hidden in a monastery in Montenegro. It later was found by Tito and placed in a museum in Cetinje but was never displayed. Considered lost for many years, in 1997 the icon was ‘traced’ and now can be seen at the National Museum in Cetinje, Montenegro.

**Collect**

Our Lady of Philerme,  
for over seven hundred years you have protected our Order,  
often against great odds and in the bleakest of conditions.  
Beloved Patroness, we pray you continue to guard and guide our Order  
in the fulfillment of its work for the poor and the sick, and for peace,  
still often carried out against opposition and in dangerous conditions.

Amen.

**23 September**



**Saints Zachary and Elizabeth, Parents of St John the Baptist**

**Memorial**

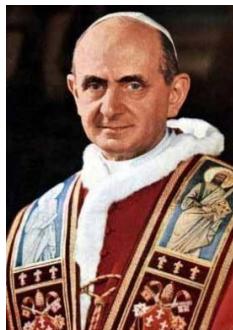
According to Saint Luke, they were righteous in the eyes of God, observing blamelessly all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord.

**Collect**

O God by whose grace Zachary and Elizabeth  
became the parents of the herald of your son,  
grant to us through their intercession the grace to love you above all things  
and so to inherit what you have promised.

Amen.

**26 September**



**St Paul VI**

**Pope and Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour  
and Devotion of the Order**

**Memorial**

Saint Pope Paul VI, whose Memorial we celebrate on 26 September, was a Bailiff Grand Cross of the Order of Malta. He was admitted to the Order in 1937 and was raised to the rank of Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion in 1958.

He was born Giovanni Battista Enrico Antonio Maria Montini on 26 September 1897, in Concesio, Italy. Ordained in 1920, he spent many years working in the Vatican Secretariat of State. While there, he organized the Vatican's massive relief work for political refugees during World War II. After being named "Pro-Secretary of State" in 1952, Montini was appointed Archbishop of Milan the following year and became known as the "archbishop of the workers." He revitalized the diocese, preaching the Gospel's social message and promoting both Catholic education and the Catholic press.

Saint Pope John XXIII named Montini a cardinal in 1958 and soon after announced the Second Vatican Council. During the Council, however, Pope John XXIII died, and the well-respected Montini was elected on 21 June 1963, to succeed him, taking the name Paul VI. Committing himself to continuing the work begun by Saint Pope John XXIII, he continued the Council and then overcame resistance to implement reforms in the areas of liturgy, Church governance, and the attitudes of Catholics toward other religions. It was during this period of the Council where the work was done on so many of the great Constitutions, Declarations and Decrees that we know so well as Catholics. These include *Dei verbum*, *Gaudium et spes*, *Nostra aetate* and *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, as well as the documents that are so special to the Order of Malta, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* and the Decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.

Paul VI's papacy and writings aimed constantly at working toward lasting justice and peace. He brought a message of human rights, human dignity, and human development to the world.

Known not only as a brilliant but also as a deeply spiritual, humble, and gentle man, Paul VI never failed to glimpse the radiant beauty of the transfigured Lord. It seems no coincidence, then, that he ended his earthly life on the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, 6 August 1978. Pope Paul VI asked that his funeral be simple, and it's this kind of humility that Pope Paul VI has been remembered for.

Pope Paul VI was declared Venerable by Pope Benedict XVI on 20 December 2012, and Beatified by Pope Francis on 19 October 2014. He was canonised by Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square on 14 October 2018.

Unusually, his Memorial is now celebrated on his birthday, rather than on the date of his death.

### Collect

O God, who are rich in mercy  
and who willed that Saint Paul the Sixth  
should preside as Pope over your universal Church,  
grant, we pray, that instructed by his teaching,  
we may open our hearts to the saving grace of Christ,  
the sole Redeemer of mankind.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**5 October**



**Blessed Peter Patarini of Imola, Prior of The Order**

**Memorial**

He was born about 1250 at Imola (Italy) into the family of the lords of Linasio. An able lawyer, at Romagna in 1297 he mediated between the Guelphs (supporting papal authority) and the Gibelins (supporting imperial authority), the factions in Italy in the exceedingly disruptive political and military struggle between the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor. He became a knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem and was elected Grand Prior at Rome. He devoted great energy to caring for the sick at Florence where he died on 5 October 1320. He was buried in the Church of Saint James in the Campo Corbolini.

**Collect**

O God, who gave to blessed Peter, Prior of our Order,  
the gift of healing discord and division,  
grant to us through his prayers  
the grace of striving for peace  
and so being called the children of God.  
Through the same Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen

**8 October**



**Saint Hugh, Religious of the Order**

**Memorial**

Saint Hugh was born about 1168 at Alessandria (Italy). He became a knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. After lengthy service with the Order in the Holy Land, he was elected Master of the Commandery of St John di Prè in Genoa (Italy), where he worked in the nearby infirmary. He was renowned for miraculous powers over the natural elements. He is believed to have died in 1233.

**Collect**

O God, who gave to Saint Hugh  
power to heal the sick by the sign of the cross,  
give us the spirit of your own love,  
to serve you in our sick brothers and sisters.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**11 October**



**Saint John XXIII, Pope and Bailiff of the Order**

**Memorial**

Blessed Pope John was born Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli at Sotto il Monte, Italy on 25 November 1881. In 1915 he was drafted as a sergeant in the Italian military medical corps and became a chaplain to the wounded. In 1925 Pius XI made him Bishop and Apostolic Visitor in Bulgaria and he took as his Episcopal motto: "*Obedientia et Pax*" (Obedience and Peace).

In 1953 he was created Cardinal and became Patriarch of Venice. In 1956 he was invested as Bailiff in the Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta. At the death of Pius XII he was elected Pope on 28 October 1958. His was an authentic image of the "Good Shepherd": meek and gentle, enterprising and courageous, simple and active. On 24 June 1961, the patronal feast of our Order, he approved the current Constitution of our Order. In 1962 he opened the Second Vatican Council. He died on the evening of 3 June 1963.

Pope Francis canonized him on 27 April 2014.

**Collect**

Almighty and eternal God, who in the Blessed Pope John,  
you gave the world shining example of the good  
shepherd, grant that we, through his intercession,  
may radiate with joy the fullness of Christian love.  
We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

**13 October**



**Blessed Fra' Gerard, Founder of the Order**

**Feast**

Gerard went to Jerusalem sometime after the middle of the eleventh century. There, next to the Church of Saint John, he established a hospice (resting place) for pilgrims and the sick. To assist in this work, he founded a religious fraternity. During the Crusader siege of Jerusalem in 1099, he was in the city. All the inhabitants of the city including the Christians were forced to assist in the defence of the walls, but instead of stones, Gerard threw small loaves of bread to the hungry besiegers. After the conquest of the city, Gerard served the multitude of wounded, sick and dying.

Many of the crusading knights put aside the sword to join Gerard in this work and the brotherhood expanded rapidly. On 15 February 1113, Pope Paschal II solemnly approved the Order. The Letters Apostolic, *Piae postulatio voluntatis*, were addressed to 'Gerard, Founder and Warden of the hospice at Jerusalem and to his lawful successors'.

Gerard conceived the principle that the sick and the poor were the 'lords' of the members of his order and the members were their 'serfs', under the obligation to render the same devotion and reverence that secular lords would receive from their liegemen. He died at Jerusalem on 3 September 1120.

**Collect**

O God, who exalted Blessed Gerard  
because of his care for the poor and the sick,  
and though him founded in Jerusalem  
The Order of Saint John the Baptist,  
give us the grace of seeing, as he did,  
the image of your Son in our brothers and sisters.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit  
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

**21 October**



**Blessed Karl, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary,  
Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion of the Order**

**Memorial**

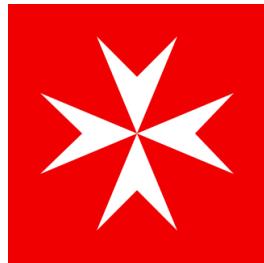
Born the grandnephew of Emperor Franz-Josef, he was far down the line of succession to the throne. Due to a series of tragedies, in 1916 in the middle of the The Great War (World War I), he succeeded to the imperial and royal crowns. He very strongly opposed the war and attempted through secret negotiations to bring about a fair and lasting peace. As a result, he was known as "The Peace Emperor". In 1919 the socialist government forced him into exile where he and his family lived a quiet, humble, deeply religious Catholic life. His attempt in 1921 to return to Hungary failed. Emperor Karl and his family were exiled to the island of Madeira where they lived in poverty, and where he bore a serious illness with great trust in God. He died in Funchal on 1 April 1922. The date for his memorial was set as 21 October, the day on which he had married Zita, Princess of the House of Bourbon-Parma.

**Collect**

O God, through the diversities of this world you led  
Blessed Karl from this earthly realm to the crown  
reserved for him in heaven.  
Grant through his intercession  
that we may so serve your Son  
and our brothers and sisters  
that we may become worthy of eternal life.  
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**19 November**

**All Saints of the Order**



**Memorial**

When we remember “all the saints” of our Order, it is well to reflect that we refer not only to those who have been formally recognized by the Church through beatification or canonization. On this day we remember the thousands of our predecessors in the Order of St John, including knights, sisters, dames, donats, chaplains, auxiliary troops, supporters who have already entered the presence of God in heaven, for all such are recognized as ‘saints’.

**Collect**

GOD, the source of all holiness  
and of varying forms of it that endow your Church  
and build up the Body of Christ,  
give us the grace to follow the saints of our Order  
in living for you alone by meditating on your law and  
by perfect self-denial so that we may come with them  
to the bliss of eternal life.

We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ  
your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen

**2 December**



**The Blessed Virgin Mary, Cause of Our Joy, venerated in the Order  
under the title "Our Lady of Liesse"**

**Memorial**

In 1134 three Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, prisoners of the Muslims in Egypt, miraculously found or received in their prison a statue of Our Lady, which they named "Notre Dame de Liesse" [which means "joy" in French].

A young Muslim princess, named Ismerie, took an interest in the Knights. Through the intercession of Our Lady and the mercy of God the princess was converted. The princess arranged the escape of the pious crusaders and joined them on their journey to France. They carried the statue with them, and in the region of Laon, about 35 miles northwest of Reims, they founded a church as a resting place for the statue.

Through local devotion the church took on the name of the statue, and gave that name to the whole region, so that "Notre Dame de Liesse" came to mean both "Our Lady of Joy" and "Our Lady of [the place called] Liesse". The statue came to be venerated by many, and "Our Lady of Liesse" became the Patroness of the Diocese of Soissons.

In 1620 the Bailiff of Armenia, Fra' Jacques Chenu de Bellay", built a church to Our Lady of Liesse at Valletta in Malta. The original statue was destroyed during the French Revolution, but the medieval basilica at Liesse remained a centre of devotion to the Mother of God, and a new statue was installed and crowned there in 1857. It is still the focus of pilgrimage, especially on Whit Monday.

**Collect**

O God, who brought joy to the world by the incarnation of Christ your Son,  
grant to us, who honour his Mother as Cause of our Joy,  
the grace to follow your commandments and to set our hearts  
on the true joy of heaven.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**Sources:**

Fra' James-Michael von Stroebel, Order of Malta American Association

Proprium Breviarii of the Irish Association