

PART XIII. SAINTS AND SAINT TO BE

13.1 Carmelite Saints

A saint is a person who is recognized as having an exceptional degree of holiness or likeness or closeness to God.

Carmelite Saints

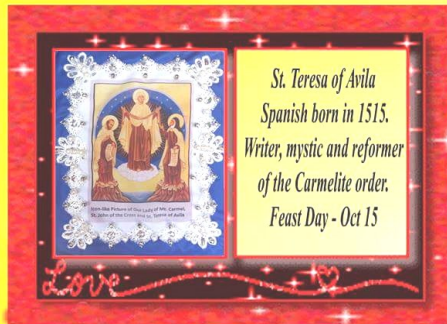
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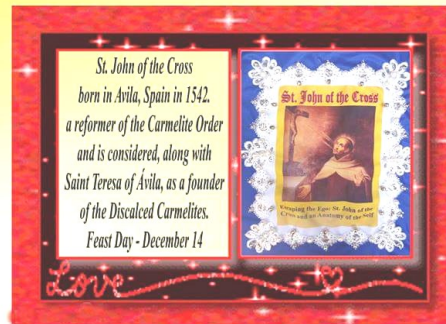
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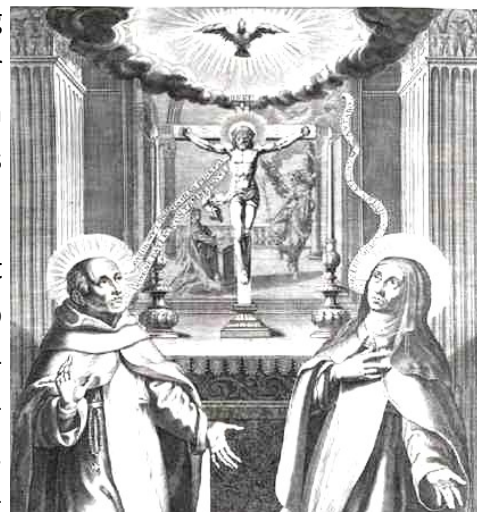


Tarpaulin posted before Ortega twins 84 Days Around World Pilgrimage at Sea and Sky Hotel, Sea and Sky College, Twins Haven and St. Teresa of Avila Community, OCDS House of Prayer. The tarpaulin at the hotel and Twins Have were removed. Now, two tarpaulins are at the

The soul's journey to God with St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross

We cannot speak of Saint John without mentioning Saint Teresa of Avila. Although years apart in age and in their lived experience of religious life, the two met when St. John went back to Medina del Campo to celebrate his First Mass after ordination at 25 years of age.

Teresa having several years at the Incarnation Convent in Avila, had begun her reform to establish houses closer to the original spirit of Carmel. At the time of their first conversation He had entered the Carmelites but felt unhappy thinking he was called to a more austere life of the Carthusians. Teresa, beginning the foundation of her second reformed Carmel, was 52. This would require a like-minded person, one who shared a common vision. Thus out of this need grew a deep and lasting friendship. Teresa speaks of such a relationship when she writes in one of her letters, "What a wonderful thing it is for two souls to understand each other, for they neither lack something to say, nor grow tired."



John recognized in Teresa's reform what he had so ardently been seeking and acknowledged her leadership and guidance. Teresa appreciated in this new acquaintance the richness of his deep interior life. He became the confessor and spiritual director for her and her 'daughters' at the convent in Avila; around 150 of them. They shared some secondary traits of likeness, such as keen intelligence, common sense, determination, and courage. Their likenesses advanced them toward the same goal while their differences enhanced the spirit that would permeate the reform.

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In the convent cells of Avila that still stand today, Teresa's quote resides on the wall: "I cannot be in the presence of John without being lifted up into the presence of God." In each other, they found God's friendship and company. Both were among the acclaimed writers of the spiritual life and able to articulate well their own mystical experiences; both became saints and doctors of the Church.

Visiting Segovia and Avila awakened in us twins that the Saints, though gone in this earth having seen their tombs during our Avila 2015 Pilgrimage, live on well beyond their earthly departure. It is with this realization, that we the Ortega twins of La Union, Philippines are determined to follow their examples and inspiring words. The vibration of their very presence pushes us to walk in the footsteps of these saints in pilgrimage, and soar in their spirit within, that we too may be inspired to live holy lives and through our examples win souls to God.

Proverbs 11:30 "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise." Daniel 12:3 "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." The authority we have from God is to serve His people

13.2 Twin Saints

There is a special bond between twins. Twins are two offspring produced by the same pregnancy. Twins can be either 'identical' or 'fraternal'. Usually they are the people in the world who stays in the womb of a mother for nine months. Most likely, twins share memories of adventures and mishaps, sorrows and joys.

AMAZING TWIN SAINTS is the journey of twin saints. How exciting! Twins and Saints! These saints give substance to their belief that God deserves priority in their lives. In the course of their lives, these great twin saints, adopted a policy and attitude, which is unique to them and which edifies us all.

AMAZING TWIN SAINTS

Twins _ two unique souls united by birth.

Three martyred twin brothers:



Sts. Gervase & Protase, Sts. Mark & Marcellian, Sts. Cosmas & Damian



'Please do not leave me tonight, brother. Let us keep on talking about the joys of heaven till morning. Terrible storm prevented Benedict from going back to the abbey. 'What have you done Scholastica? 'When I appealed to you, you would not listen to me. So I turned to my God and He heard my prayer.

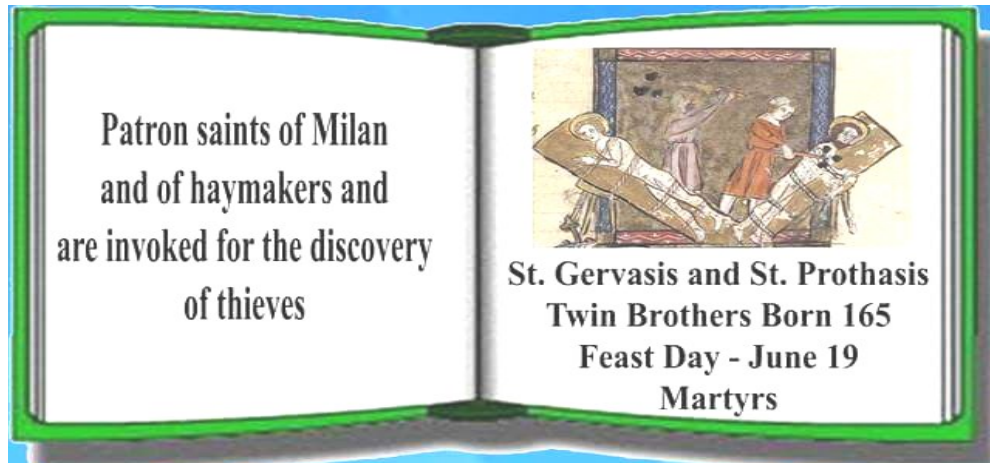


Why you can't become a saint by yourself? God created each of us to find completion

Two pairs of twins:
St. Benedict, founder of the Benedictine Order.
St. Scholastica, revered as the

Two sets of twins: Sts Benedict and Scholastica & Ortega Twins

1) Saint Gervase and Saint Protase



They are considered the protomartyrs of Milan having shed their blood for Christ in the year 165.

A Roman general named Astacius was told the gods would not answer his prayers unless the twin brothers Gervase and Protase would sacrifice to them. Being Christians they refused to sacrifice to other gods. Consequently Astacius had Gervase beaten to death with a leaden scourge and then ordered Protase beheaded.

Two centuries later St. Ambrose was praying when in a vision he saw each saint in white. Ambrose on his knees, Paul with long beard and balding from the front who directed Ambrose to where he could find the bodies of these martyrs.

Their grave was excavated and *Ambrose discovered their bodies, flecked with blood and incorrupt as if they had just died that day. During the translation of their bodies a blind man gained his sight by touching the bier and many were set free who had been possessed by demons.*



The icon portrays the vision seen by Ambrose

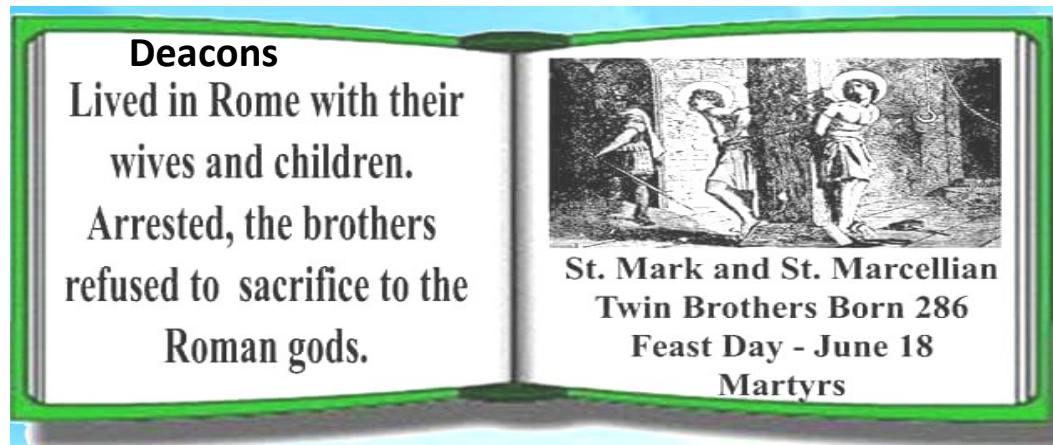
Their feast day in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church is June 19, marking the translation of their relics. In the Eastern Rite, it is October 14, the traditional day of their death. They are the patron saints of Milan and of haymakers and are invoked for the discovery of thieves.

They are two of the eleven holy martyrs mentioned always in the Litany of the Saints. The other nine are: Saint Stephen, Saint Laurence, Saint Vincent, Saint Fabian and St. Sebastian, Saint John and Saint Paul, and Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian.



The crypt in the Basilica of Sant'Ambrogio in Milan. Embossed silver urn, displaying the skeletons of Saints Ambrose, Gervase, and Protase.

2) St. Mark & St. Marcellian



Twin brothers from a distinguished family in Rome. They became deacons in the early Church, married and with children.

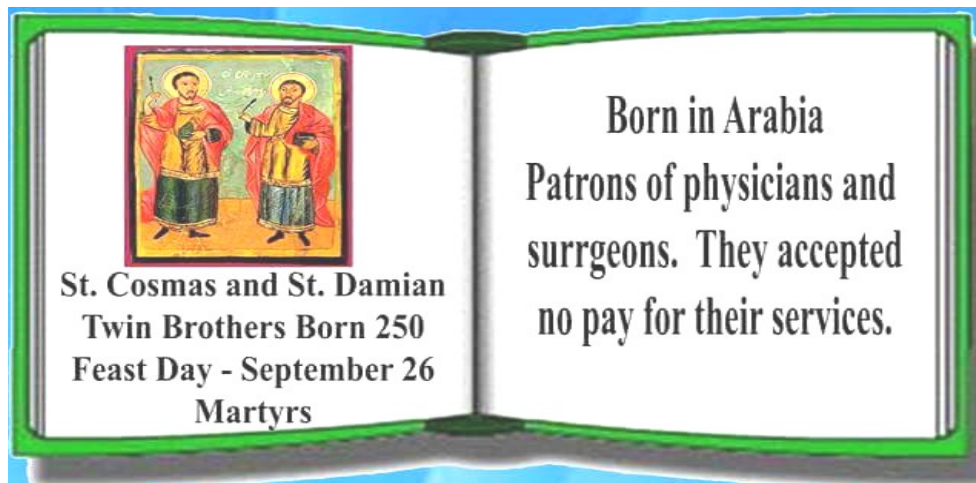
They were thrown into prison for being Christians. Their mother and father, who were still pagans, visited their sons in prison and pleaded with them to return to the worship of false gods so that they could be freed. With the guidance of St Sebastian (also imprisoned), he encouraged them to stand strong in their Christian faith. St. Sebastian's exhortation was so persuasive that the parents of Marcellian and Mark were converted, along with several friends who were present, as well as the other prisoners. All of these new Christian converts were eventually martyred alongside Mark and Marcellian during the Diocletian persecution in 286.

The bodies of St Mark and St Marcellian were buried in the Via Ardeatina, near the cemetery of Domitilla. Their bodies were moved during the 9th century, to the Church of Saints Cosmas and Damian during the reign of Pope Gregory XIII. Their bodies remain there in a tomb, near an ancient painting of the two martyrs with a third person, who appears to be the Virgin Mary. Their Feast Day is the 18th of June.



Sts. Mark & Marcellian led to martyrdom

3) St. Cosmas and St. Damian



Twin brothers born in Syria in the 3rd century. They were also doctors, and they became known as “the holy moneyless ones” because they cared for the sick free of charge. The strange practice of accepting no money for medical care was their way of embodying God’s providential love and care for his people.

They were arrested on September 27, during the persecution of Christians by Diocletian in 303. Soon after, the faithful brothers defied death by water, fire and crucifixion before they were finally beheaded in Cilicia, along with their three brothers. They were buried in Cyrrhus, Syria. Their feast day is on September 26.

During our Avila 2015 Pilgrimage, God willed that we see the Church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian at Burgos, Spain. Luz woke up at 2 o’clock in the morning to talk with her daughter Ludi. She saw the Church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian in a brochure and so we went out of the hotel at 4 a.m. It was chilly morning with -1 degree centigrade recorded at the monitor along the streets. There was a man whom we asked for directions. He pointed at the Church and Nila is reminded of our papa who could have helped us see the Church. We prayed outside the Church built during the 15th century. Today, this is an active parish church.

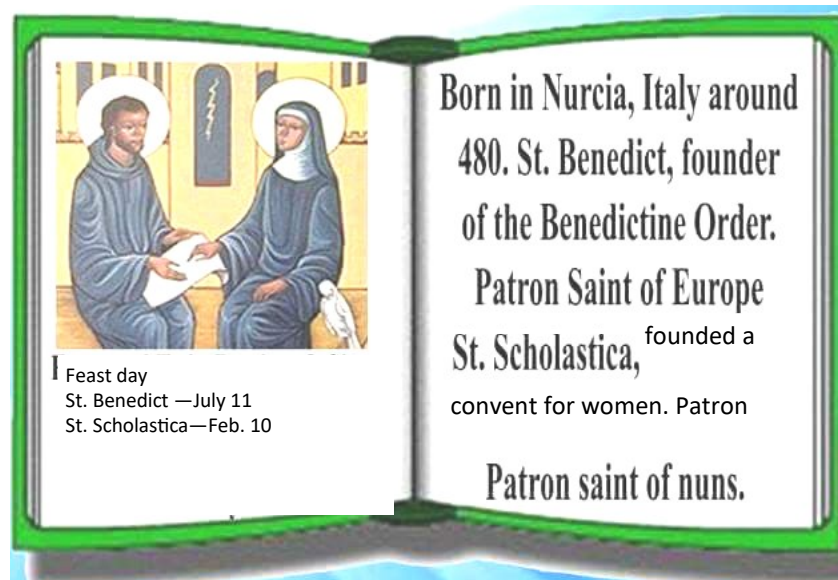


Patrons of physicians, surgeons, pharmacists, bar-



Church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian

4) Saint Benedict and Saint Scholastica



Twins born in 480. Saint Benedict is regarded as the father of Western monasticism, and his twin sister, St. Scholastica as the founder of female monasticism. Patron saint of nuns.

It was said that St. Scholastica was consecrated to God at her birth, but continued to live at home until her brother founded his monastery at Monte Cassino. She then, in turn, established a convent in the nearby town of Plombariola about five miles away from Monte Cassino. Saint Gregory the Great's account of Saint Scholastica's last visit with her brother.

Once each year, Scholastica would meet Benedict in a building owned by the monastery but outside of the monastery walls. The day of their final visit was beautiful, with not a cloud in the sky. As night fell, Saint Benedict prepared to return to his monastery, but Saint Scholastica wanted him to stay. When he told her that he could not, she bowed her head in prayer, and suddenly a storm descended on the building, with torrential rain, thunder, and lightning. St. Benedict asked her in shock what she had done. She replied, "I asked a favor of you, and you refused it. I asked it of God, and He has granted it!" Saint Gregory comments that her prayer was answered because it was in line with the charity of God: that the love of a sister for her brother overcame the law of Benedict's rule. Unable to return to the monastery because of the weather, Benedict spent the night in conversation with his sister, not knowing that it would be their last meeting. Three days later St. Benedict saw in a vision his sister "ascending to heaven in the form of a dove." He had her remains brought to his monastery to be buried there. St. Scholastica died 543 A.D.

During our Jubilee 2000 pilgrimage, we went to Monte Cassino Abbey, where the tombs of St. Benedict and his twin sister, St. Scholastica are located. At the High Altar of Monte Cassino's Basilica Church under a Latin inscription, which translates, "St. Benedict and St. Scholastica were never separated in the spirit during their life nor are their bodies separated in their death."



Ortega twins left a statue of God the Father for the monks at the Monte Cassino Abbey.

13.3. Child Saints

1. St. Maria Goretti

We went to the Italian Embassy to ask directions on the Missionarie Unitas in Christo Ad Patrem in Anzio, Falashe, Rome. While there, someone said that a well-known child Saint lives nearby. I asked, "is she St. Maria Goretti?" Yes, the lady replied.

St. Maria Goretti was born in 1890 in Italy. Alessandro Serenelli, tried to rape her and when she refused to submit to him, he stabbed her 14 times, and died.

While in jail, the unrepentant Alessandro had a vision of St. Maria offering him flowers that paved the way for his repentance and conversion. Alessandro later became a priest.



St. Maria Goretti is a model for children. During our visit, we were glad to see pupils in pilgrimage too.

When Pope Pius XII canonized St. Maria on June 24, 1950, her mother and Alessandro, her assailant were in attendance, a rare event in the history of the Catholic Church. Goretti is a model of purity and forgiveness, for she was able to forgive her murderer, Alessandro Serenelli.

2. Blessed Laura Vicuna

We heard mass in a chapel and saw a statue of a child. When we visited a school, we saw again the picture of the child. She was Blessed Laura Vicuna.

Laura was born on April 5, 1891, as the first child of Senora Mercedes Pino and Jose Domingo Vicuna, a soldier who belonged to a noble Chilean family.

Seeing that she could not survive there, she decided to leave the country. She finally found work at a large "hacienda" owned by Senor Manuel Mora. His financial support would allow her to enroll her two girls as pupils in the Salesian Sisters' school in Junin but what a price!

Laura was very happy under the guidance of the young Missionary Sisters but distressed about her mother's situation with Senor Mora. Deeply believing that she will soon die because of her sickness she to the Lord: "I offer you my life for that of my mother." Laura knew she would not recover "Mamma, I'm dying, but I'm happy to offer my life for you. I asked Our Lord for this." Her mother was shocked. She fell on her knees sobbing. She instantly understood everything. "Laura, my daughter, please forgive me. O dear God, please forgive my life of sin. Yes, I will start again." Laura's face was now serene and at peace. Laura kissed the crucifix, smiled and murmured: Thank you Jesus! Thank you Mary! Now I die content!" And she died.



Blessed Laura Vicuña

3. Saint Dominic Savio

Dominic Savio was an Italian adolescent student of St. Don Bosco. On March 5, 1855, the second Sunday of Lent that St. John Bosco gave the boys at the Oratory where Dominic Savio was a pupil, the sermon on how easy it was to become a saint. Just do this: diligently do the ordinary things of the day in an extraordinary way. Say your prayers devoutly. Perform all your duties exactly, give your classmates good example and above all be cheerful. The Lord loves a cheerful giver.” He became ill and died at the age of 14, possibly from pleurisy.



Bosco regarded Savio very highly and wrote a biography of his young student, *The Life of Dominic Savio*. Coincidentally, on March 5, 1950, Savio was beatified and canonized on June 12, 1954.

13.4 Aspiring for Sainthood

According to the Catholic Education Resource Center, there are five steps involved in being named a saint:

Step 1: Die _ The first thing you have to do to become a saint is to die. In death, you have the benefit of being in heaven along with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

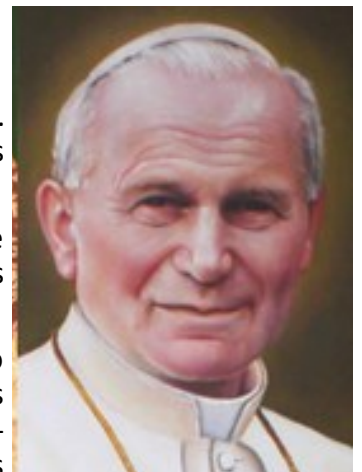
Step 2: Servant of God _The bishop will interview people, collect the person’s writings, etc., then will write a report. If the report, becomes “Servant of God.”

Step 3: Venerable The findings of the local bishop are sent to Rome to the Congregation of the Causes of Saints. The investigation continues with a “devil’s advocate” raises questions and objections to the candidate’s sainthood to examine all aspects of life including circumstances of death. If pass this stage known as "Venerable"

Step 4: Blessed If a person claims a miracle happened due to intercession by the person in heaven, and it is investigated, confirmed and approved by the pope, then the would-be saint's status is moved to "Blessed."

Step 5: Saint Once a second miracle is confirmed, the person may be named a Saint; assigned a feast day on which they will be celebrated; and a Mass at the Vatican usually follows.

The sitting pope has the option to shorten any part of the process. Pope Benedict XVI waived the five-year waiting period and Pope John Paul II became a saint on 27 April 2014 .



St. John Paul II

13.4 Canonized Saints 2002 and 2004

1) St. Josmaria Escriva de Balaguer

The Mt. Pinatubo eruption in 1991, was the worst volcanic upheaval of the country. An enterprising couple from one of the affected areas resettled in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga and started a livelihood business of producing souvenir items made of lahar. In our Marian pilgrimage cum canonization of Blessed Josemaria Escriva in Rome, we twins presented a gift— a statuette of God the Father, a lahar product, to Cardinal Francis Arinze.

Josmaria Escriva de Balaguer founded Opus Dei on October 2, 1928 in Madrid to spread this good news. He was canonized on October 6 at 10 a.m. In his homily Pope John Paul II said: “With docility he allowed himself to be led by the Spirit, convinced that only in this way can one fully accomplish God's will.”

2) St. Hannibal Mary di Francia and five others

On May 9, 2004, a video on the life of Blessed Hannibal was shown to familiarize the faithful on the life of Blessed Hannibal, Founder of the Rogationist Fathers and the Daughters of the Divine Zeal. He was born in Messina, Italy, where his incorruptible body is kept in the Temple of the Prayer for Vocations near the cathedral. We bought a souvenir bag with St. Hannibal's picture at 10 euros each.



Here is a faith story of us twins. We left Rome on May 31 riding on a train with the plan of seeing Avila, Spain. When my twin woke up to go to the comfort room, she saw my two small bags in front of the door. She asked, “Why are your bags outside?” I immediately opened my bag to see our money. “Thanks God, our money was intact. I exclaimed, St. Hannibal prevented the thief from getting our money.” I kept our money inside the bag we used during the canonization of St. Hannibal, which had his picture, a rosary and God the Father beads.

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Religious Factory shop at Pampanga



Luz with St. Josemaria Escriva statuette



13.5 Filipinos awaiting Sainthood

Venerables " or two steps away from being declared a saint.			
Ignacia del Espiritu Santo, Mother Ignacia February 1, 1663 – Sep- tember 10, 1748 Binondo, Manila	Foundress, in 1684, of the Beaterio de la Compañia de Jesus, now known as the Congregation of the Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM) Declared by Pope Benedict XVI on July 6, 2007		
Alfredo Maria Obviar y Aranda 29 Aug 1889 --1 Oct 1978 Lipa City, Batangas	First bishop of Lucena Founder of the Congregation of the Missionary Catechists of Saint Therese of the Infant Jesus. Declared by Pope Francis on November 7, 2018.		
María Beatriz del Rosario Arroyo y Pidal February 17, 1884 – June 14, 1957 Molo, Iloilo	Founder of the Dominican Sisters of the Most Holy Rosary of the Philippines (Dominican Sisters of Molo) De- clared by Pope Francis on June 11, 2019.		
Mother Francisca Del Espiritu Santo De Fuentes 1647 – August 24, 1711 Manila	First Prioress of the Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena in the Philippines Declared by Pope Francis on July 6, 2019		
Servant of God — posthumously declared "heroic in virtue"			
Cecilia Talangpaz July 16, 1693 –July 31, 1732 Dionisia Talangpaz March 12, 1691 -October 12, 1732 Calumpit, Bulacan	Foundresses of "Beaterio de San Sebastián de Calumpang" (now the Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters)		Promoted: Bishop James Paul  PRAYER God our Father, we thank You for giving Your Church, a great missionary, pastor and founder of the first Carmel in the Philippines, Bishop James Paul McCloskey. Grant us the grace to imitate his deep life of prayer, humility, self-sacrifice, charity and zeal for the salvation of human-kind. We humbly ask You, Father to raise him to the altars so that through him also You may be glorified. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.
Alfredo Florentin Verzosa December 9, 1877 - June 27, 1954 Vigan, Ilocos Sur	First Ilocano Bishop and the First Filipino Bishop of Lipa. Founder of the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart		
Teofilo Bastida Camomot March 3, 1914 – September 27, 1988) Cogon, Carcar, Cebu	Coadjutor archbishop of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro. Founder of the Pauline Faith Defenders and the Carmelite Tertiaries of the Blessed Eucharist. (Daughters of Saint Teresa)		

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