

# A year of charity

January 28<sup>th</sup>  
is  
the  
memorial  
for  
St. Thomas  
Aquinas



**A**LL SOULS DAY IS A SPECIAL TIME WHEN we pray for our dead; however, we can pray for Holy Souls all year using the days associated with particular saints and what they taught about practising charity for the Holy Souls. We can take the opportunity to incorporate some of their prayers and practices into our own lives.

January 28<sup>th</sup> is the memorial of Thomas Aquinas, who explains that the measure of the length of time that a soul spends in Purgatory is "discontinuous time", which means that one spiritual moment spent in purgatory may last several days of our solar time. As such, we cannot overestimate the importance of praying for Holy Souls.

*St. Thomas counsels that prayer for the dead is more pleasing to God than is prayer for the living, because the dead are in greatest need of it, and cannot help themselves in the same way in which the living can. The best we can do for the Holy Souls and for ourselves is to offer alms, prayers, and Masses for them.*

February 22 is the feast of Chair of Peter, Apostle. St. Peter tells us (1 Pet. 3, 19) that after His death, Jesus preached His redemption "to the spirits in prison." Therefore, the concept of another temporary, intermediate place, such as purgatory, has been taught from the beginning of the Church.

*We learn from St. Peter the importance of offering alms, prayers, and Masses for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. He says charity covers a multitude of sins. (1Pt 4:8).*

March 19 is the solemnity of Joseph, husband of Mary, and the foster father of Jesus. His death is the most singularly privileged and happiest death ever recorded, as he died in the presence and care of Jesus and Mary. We should ask St. Joseph's intercession for a happy death

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like his own and for the dying to have the same.

*St. Joseph, the great intercessor for suffering souls, is a powerful intercessor if we pray to him for the suffering souls in Purgatory.*

St. Catherine of Siena, April 29, lived in a time when decadence had infiltrated the Church. This led to a schism in the faith; however, Catherine had considerable influence, and worked tirelessly for the reunification of the Church. She is a Doctor of the Church although she could not read or write.

*She was enthusiastic about indulgences and encouraged her friends to pursue indulgences to shorten their time in Purgatory as much as they could.*

St. Catherine of Bologna, May 9, believed that if we send our prayer petitions through Purgatory that the Holy Souls will beseech God, Our Lady, and St. Joseph in heaven to grant our pleas. According to her "When I wish," she said, "to obtain some favor from the Eternal Father, I

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invoke the souls in their place of expiation, and charge them with the petition I have to make to Him, and I feel I am heard through their means."

*We, too, can please God and win blessings for ourselves by performing some indulgenced exercise for their relief knowing that they will intercede for us, in return.*

August 1 is the memorial of St. Alphonsus Liguori. He taught that we should pray and receive the sacraments often, especially the Eucharist and penance. Most important, though, is that we must pray. For he teaches that prayer saves us from the danger of losing heaven.

*The more common ways of gaining a plenary indulgence are making the Stations of the Cross, reading the Bible for one-half hour, praying before the Blessed Sacrament for one-half hour, and praying the*