

# The 3rd Week of Epiphany

## THE COLLECT

Almighty and everlasting God,  
mercifully look upon our  
infirmities, and in all our dangers  
and necessities stretch forth thy  
right hand to help and defend us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## MONDAY, JANUARY 28: ST. FABIAN

In 236, the bishop of Rome died and an assembly was held in the catacombs to elect his successor. A lay man named Fabian happened to be visiting from the country, and curious to see the process, decided to attend the assembly. He was standing in the midst of the crowd, when suddenly, a dove flew in, circled around, and landed on his shoulder. Immediately, the Christians saw this as a sign, began saying, "He is worthy" and Fabian became bishop. It turned out that he was good choice. Fabian was an able administrator, known for appointing the seven deacons who became part of the essential structure in the Roman church. He also started the custom of venerating the shrines of martyrs in the catacombs. In 249, when the Emperor Dacian commanded the persecution of Christians throughout the empire, Fabian was one of the first martyrs. His tomb was inscribed "Fabian . . . bishop . . . martyr."

## TUESDAY, JANUARY 29: ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Born around 347 in Antioch, John was given the name "Chrysostom," which means "golden-mouthed," because of his brilliant preaching. Baptized around the age of 20 (which was the common practice of the time), he studied theology and pursued a monastic life until illness forced him to give up his austere life and move back to Antioch in 381. He was ordained to the priesthood in 386 and made bishop of Constantinople (against his wishes) in 398. Because of his denouncement of sin within the clergy and royalty, the Empress Eudoxia set herself against him and sent him into exile twice. In his second exile in 407, he died after a forced march of 200 miles, saying "Glory to God for all things." This is an excerpt from his last sermon, before he left for exile:

"Christ is with me, whom then shall I fear? Let the waves rise up against me, the seas, the wrath of rules: these things to me are mere cobwebs. And if you, my dear people, had not held me back I would have left this very day. . . . This is my fortress, this is my immovable rock, this is my firm staff. If God wishes this to be, then so be it. If he wishes me to be here, I thank him. Wherever he wants me to be, I thank him. Wherever I am, there are you also; where you are, there am I too, we are one body."

## WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30: BEHEADING OF CHARLES I

Charles was born in 1600 and became the king of England in 1625. Though known for possessing virtues uncommon among the royalty, Charles is remembered more for his death than his life. Fr. John-Julian writes, "Although he was an affectionate father, a faithful and loving husband (both virtues rare among royalty), and although he was devout and punctilious in the performance of his religious duties and his defense of the Church, he was clearly a failure when it came to the practicalities of administering and maintaining a throne -- but as Bishop Creighton of London said in 1895: 'By his death, Charles saved the Church of England for the future.' " Ruling a nation of increasing Puritanism, Charles was staunch in his belief in the divine right of kings and High-Church Anglican practice. With his mishandling of an antagonistic parliament, England eventually was thrown into civil war. After imprisonment and trial, Charles was put to death on this day in 1649. After the Restoration, January 30th was kept as a day of national penitence and fasting..



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## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1: ST. BRIGID

Living from around 450 to 523, St. Brigid is one of the patron saints of Ireland, along with St. Patrick. Little is known of her life that is verifiable, but many many legends surround her. Also known as Bridget or Bride, she was the daughter of an Irish slave woman and a nobleman, Dubhthach. In some stories, her parents were baptized by St. Patrick and in others, Brigid herself was baptized by him. When she was around 14 years old, she became a nun and built a hermitage for herself in what is now Kildare. Eventually, a group of women gathered around her; they became a monastic community and Brigid was abbess. She was renowned for her compassion, and her love for animals and the natural world. She died when she was around 75 and was buried at Kildare. Alexander Carmicheal, in the *Carmina Gadelica*, says:

There are many legends and customs connected with Bride. . . . Bride is said to preside over fire, over art, over all beauty . . . beneath the sky and beneath the sea. And man being the highest type of ideal beauty, Bride presides at his birth and dedicates him to the Trinity. She is the Mary and the Juno of the Gael. She is much spoken of in connection with Mary,—generally in relation to the birth of Christ. She was the aid-woman of the Mother of Nazareth in the lowly stable, and she is the aid-woman of the mothers of Uist in their humble homes

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2: CANDLEMAS, OR THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

On this day, we celebrate the presentation of Christ in the temple. "On Candlemas Jesus is revealed to Simeon and Anna in the Temple. Simeon says, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which you have set before all men." By this he means that at last God brought about the fulfillment of the promises of God articulated in the Prophets which have been since the world began. The Light of Life would enlighten every man and the mission of God would take His disciples into all the world."

