

5. FAITH ANCESTORS page 21-32

Session Outcome: Pilgrims explore the lives of those who have walked before us.

SONG: Hail Redeemer

Hail Redeemer, King divine!
Priest and Lamb, the throne is thine;
King, whose reign shall never cease,
Prince of everlasting peace.

***Angels, saints and nations sing:
"Praise be Jesus Christ our King;
Lord of life, earth, sky and sea,
King of love on Calvary!"***

King most holy, King of truth,
guard the lowly, guide the youth;
Christ the King of glory bright,
be to us eternal light.

King, whose name creation thrills,
rule our hearts, our minds, our wills;
till in peace, each nation rings
with thy praises, King of kings.

SCRIPTURE:

Genesis 15:1-6 & 17:1-8

God promised Abraham that he was be the beginning of many generations of people whom God would love.

PRAYER: Psalm 27

Psalms Down Under by Joy Cowley

Jesus said: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life

You are the Way.
You are the bridge between earth and
heaven,
between smallness of self
and the greatness of God.
You are the path we follow
and can never lose
because it lies in our hearts.
You are the mountain, the valley,
the rough and the smooth.
You are all points of the compass.
Whoever or wherever we are,
you hold our journey in yours.

You are the Truth.
You have planted your truth within us,
the same truth for all people.
Each of us is a different container
and we wrap you in different ways
according to our culture
and our customs of worship,
but in our diversity
You are common language

and when we meet you in each other
there is recognition and rejoicing,
for truth always knows truth.

You are the Life
and there is no life without You
for You are the substance
and breath of all things.
Your life grows within and around us,
the movement of sap in our seasons,
the ebb and flow of our tides.
You are the living
and knowing of living
which we carry with us
through the doorway of death.

You who are the Way,
the Truth and the Life,
gift us with the vision
to always see you in all things.

GROUP ACTIVITY: Those Who Walked Before Us

“We believe in the communion of all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one Church; and we believe that in this communion, the merciful love of God and God’s saints is always (attentive) to our prayers.” **962 Catechism of the Catholic Church**

INPUT FOR DISCUSSION: We are blessed with saints, role models and faith ancestors who have walked before us in faith, showing us a way to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ. WYD11 has 9 patron Saints; there is a brief introduction to the life and works of each of these. Pilgrims may be encouraged to further research these saints or the lives of others who inspire them.

ACTIVITY: Break the group into small groups and give them a Saint page. Invite them to read about the 9 patron saints of WYD11 and then creatively (song/drama/poem/art) present to the whole group their answers to the following questions:

1. What are the gifts of this person?

What sustained this person on their life journey?

How did this person live their unique call from God?

REFLECTION: Spend some time writing and reflecting on this activity experience. Use the following questions to help guide your reflection:

1. Who are the saints (both living and dead) in my life that inspire me in my life journey?

What can I learn from those who have walked before to sustain me on my journey?

How do those who have walked before me show me how to live my call?



St. Rose of Lima (1586-1617)

Birth: April 20, 1586; Lima, Peru

Feast Day: August 23rd

Canonization: October 11, 2009 by Pope Benedict XVI

Patron Saint of: Americans, people ridiculed for their piety and against vanity

Did you know? St. Rose of Lima was born in the present-day city of Lima (Peru). She was from a large family. As she grew older, she became more and more beautiful but when she was admired, Rose cut off her hair against the objections of her friends and her family. She spent many hours contemplating the [Blessed Sacrament](#), which she received daily. She was determined to take a vow of virginity although her parents wanted her to marry.

Rose helped the sick and hungry around her community. She would bring them to her home and take care of them. Her nights were devoted to prayer in a little [grotto](#) which she had built. She became a hermit leaving the grotto only for her visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

She was permitted to enter a Dominican convent in 1602. In her twentieth year she donned the habit and took a vow of perpetual virginity. She died on August 24, 1617, at the age of 31, having prophesied the date of her death exactly. St. Rose was a mystic and visionary.

Walking with St. Rose of Lima: do not seek the path of worldly greatness, try to live each day as faithfully to your vocation as possible, accept the sufferings cheerfully, as gifts from God.

“When we serve the poor and the sick we serve Jesus. We must not fail to help our neighbours, because in them we serve Jesus.”

St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556)

Birth: December 14, 1491

Feast Day: July 31st

Canonization: March 13, 1622 by [Pope Gregory XV](#)

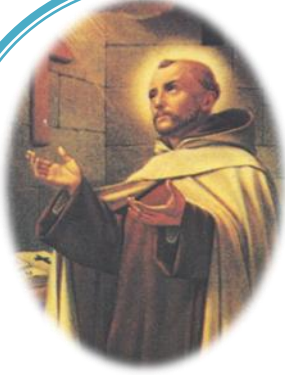
Patron Saint of: Jesuits, retreats and soldiers



Did you know? Ignatius was the youngest of 13 children, born in the great castle of Loyola in Guipuzcoa, in the Basque country of northwest Spain. When he was old enough he became a soldier of [Spain](#) to fight against the French. A cannon ball and a series of bad operations ended his military career in 1521. While he recovered, Ignatius read a book on the lives of the saints and Life of Christ which inspired his conversion. Soon after, he experienced visions but a year later suffered a time of great difficulty worrying about what was right and wrong and feeling deep fear. Out of this experience he wrote his famous "Spiritual Exercises". After travelling and studying in different schools, he finished in Paris where he received his degree at the age of 43. Ignatius of Loyola was the main creator and initial Superior General of the [Society of Jesus](#), a religious organisation of the Catholic Church whose members, known as Jesuits, served the Pope as missionaries. He is remembered as a talented spiritual director. His legacy includes many Jesuit schools and educational institutions worldwide.

Walking with St. Ignatius of Loyola: Work hard and do your best, strive to be humble and do everything for the greater glory of God, seek out solid spiritual formation, courageously defend the truth, resist temptations of the world and urge others, by word and example, to live a truly Christian life

“Few souls understand what God would accomplish in them if they were to abandon themselves unreservedly to Him and if they were to allow His grace to mould them accordingly”.



St. John of the Cross (1542-1591)

Birthplace: Fontiveros, Spain

Feast Day: December 14th

Canonization: 27 December 1726 by [Pope Benedict XIII](#)

Patron Saint of: Contemplative life, mystical theology, mystics and Spanish poets

Did you know? At fourteen, [John](#) took a [job](#) caring for hospital patients who suffered from incurable diseases and madness. It was out of this [poverty](#) and suffering that [John](#) learned to search for beauty and [happiness](#) not in the world, but in God. After [John](#) joined the Carmelite order, Saint Teresa of [Avila](#) asked him to help her reform movement. [John](#) supported her [belief](#) that the order should return to its [life](#) of prayer. Many Carmelites felt threatened by this reform and some members of John's own order kidnapped him. He was locked in a cell and beaten. Yet in that unbearable dark, cold and desolation, his love and [faith](#) were like fire and light. He had nothing left but [God](#) -- and [God](#) brought [John](#) his greatest joys in that tiny cell. John left us many books of practical advice on spiritual growth and [prayer](#) that are just as relevant today as they were then.

Walking with St. John of the Cross: Reach union of God through prayer, don't settle for mediocrity, cling to God in the face of persecution and never back down, turn every suffering into an opportunity to grow in holiness, don't be afraid of the tasks entrusted to you but trust in the guidance of Our Blessed Mother.

"Where there is no love, put love -- and you [will](#) find love."

"At the end of our life, we shall all be judged by charity."

St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552)



Birth: April 7, 1506; Xavier Castle, Navarre, Spain

Feast Day: December 3rd

Canonization: 12 March 1622 by [Gregory XV](#)

Patron Saint of: All Foreign missions

Did you know? St. Francis Xavier was a pioneering Catholic missionary. He was born in Spain and studied with St. Ignatius of Loyola at the University of Paris. With Ignatius and 5 others, he founded the Society of Jesus at [Montmartre](#) in 1534. He led an extensive mission into Asia, mainly in the Asian [Portuguese Empire](#) of the time. He was influential in the spreading and upkeep of Catholicism most notably in [India](#), but also ventured into [Japan](#), [Borneo](#), the [Moluccas](#) and other areas which had thus far not been visited by Christian missionaries. Working against great difficulties, language problems, inadequate funds, and lack of cooperation, often actual resistance, he left the [mark](#) of his missionary [zeal](#) and energy on many places and people.

Walking with St. Francis Xavier: Allow God to use you to preach the Gospel and serve humanity. Work tirelessly to build up the Kingdom of God on earth even when you are under difficult circumstances.

“It is not the actual physical exertion that counts toward a man's progress, nor the nature of the task, but the spirit of faith with which it is undertaken”

St. John of Avila (1500-1569)



Birth: January 6, 1500; Almodóvar del Campo, near Toledo, Spain

Feast Day: May 10th

Canonization: 1970 by [Pope Paul VI](#).

Patron Saint of: Spanish clergy

Did you know? He went to the [University of Salamanca](#) to study law at 14yrs but felt a call to religious life. After some time he took up the study of philosophy and theology. While he was a student his parents died and after his ordination he celebrated his first Mass in the church where they were buried, sold the family property and gave the proceeds to the poor. He is known for celebrating Mass with great devotion, tremendous gift of preaching, encouraging frequent communion, efforts to reform the lay state and the clergy, apostolic and social works, wise spiritual council, charity, prudence and discretion.

Walking with St. John of Avila: cultivate a profound love for Jesus in the Eucharist, be a reformer of your day where there is a need, take your spiritual formation seriously, preach and live the truth even though you may be persecuted for it.

“That is why he (Christ) tells us that if we want to join him, we shall travel the way he took. It is surely not right that the Son of God should go his way on the path of shame while the sons of men walk the way of worldly honour: ‘The disciple is not above his



St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)

Birth: March 28th, 1515; Avila, Spain

Feast Day: October 15th

Canonization: 1622 by [Pope Gregory XV](#)

Patron Saint of: Many things including sickness and sick people, people in need of grace.

Did you know? Saint Teresa was born in Avila, Spain, March 28, 1515. In her youth she had the reputation of being quite beautiful. Her personality was extroverted, her manner affectionately buoyant and she had the ability to adapt easily to all kinds of persons and circumstances. Teresa was fascinated by accounts of the lives of the saints and ran away from home at age seven with her brother Rodrigo to find martyrdom (Her uncle stopped them when he spotted the two outside the city walls).

She led a fairly [ordinary](#) life, though she was convinced that she was a horrible sinner. Her teenage years were much like those of any other teenager throughout time but when she was 16, her strict father decided she was out of control and sent her to a convent. In the cloister she suffered greatly from illness. Early in her sickness she experienced periods of religious ecstasy through the use of mystical writings. At the age of 43, she became determined to found a new [convent](#) that went back to the basics of a contemplative order: a simple [life](#) of [poverty](#) devoted to prayer. She is the founder of the [Discalced](#) (which means bare foot!) Carmelites. In 1970 she was declared a [Doctor](#) of the Church for her writing and teaching on prayer, one of two women to be honoured in this way.

Walking with St. Teresa of Avila: Centre your life on prayer, give your heart to the Lord, live humility by standing in the truth about yourself, strive to practice the virtues in every moment.

“Let nothing trouble you, let nothing make you afraid. All things pass away. God never changes. Patience obtains everything. God alone is enough.”

St. Rafael Arnaiz (1911-1938)

Birth: April 9, 1911; Burgos, Spain

Feast Day: April 26th

Canonization: October 11, 2009 by Pope Benedict XVI



Did you know? St Rafael Arnáiz Barón's sensitivity to spiritual topics and to art was apparent from boyhood. These qualities were well balanced giving him an open, joyful attitude to the world, combined with good humour, respect and humility. In 1930 Rafael embarked on architectural studies in Madrid. After completing his secondary schooling, that summer he had spent a holiday near Avila at the home of his uncle and aunt. It was they who introduced him to the Trappist Monastery of San Isidoro de Dueñas whose beauty and prayerful atmosphere attracted him. Three years later having finished his architectural studies, he entered as a [postulant](#), convinced that this was his true vocation. Four months after entering the monastery he was smitten by a serious form of diabetes which forced him to go back and forth between his home and the monastery repeatedly between 1935 and 1937. It was at the height of the Spanish Civil War. On his final return to the monastery he was made to live on the fringes of the community. Canon law at the time did not permit a person in his condition of poor health to take monastic vows. He died in the monastery's infirmary on 26 April 1938 after a final attack of the disease at only 27 years old.

Despite his brief life in the monastery, Arnáiz embodied [Cistercian](#) grace in a pure and intense way. Allowing himself to be led through a series of bewildering contradictions and perplexities – sickness, war and inability to pronounce his vows. Arnáiz was proclaimed as a model for the youth of today by Pope John Paul II who said that he set an example, especially for young people "of a loving and unconditional response to the divine call".

Walking with St. Rafael Arnaiz: Respond to the call of the Lord immediately, abandon yourself into the hands of God, embrace suffering with joy and let your happiness be in God.



St. Maria of the Head

Birthplace: Uceda, Guadalajara, Spain

Feast Day: September 9th and celebrated on May 15th (with her husband)

Beatification: 1697 by [Pope Innocent XII](#)

Did you know? Saint Maria's last name is actually Toribia. When living in Torrelaguna, she met St. Isidore whom she married. She was a housewife and would constantly help her husband with tasks such as building wells; and help in the community such as cleaning the local chapel etc. According to legend, their son fell into a well and drowned but when his parents prayed he might be returned to them, the water rose to ground level and brought up the child full of life and health. They promised then to separate, apparently out of gratitude to God and to live in community celibately. Maria became a hermit like her husband; she also performed miracles and merited after her death the name of Santa Maria de la *Cabeza*, meaning *Head*, because her head, conserved in a reliquary and carried in procession, has often brought down rain from heaven for the afflicted countryside. Her remains are honoured by all of Spain by pilgrimages and processions at Torrelaguna, where they were transferred in 1615. In 1645, St. Maria was moved to St. Andrew's Church in Madrid, to be venerated along with the body of her husband, St. Isidore. She is known for simplicity, austerity, charity, living united to husband, spirit of service, purity, modesty and devotion to God.

Walking with St. Maria of the Head: seek out the humble tasks, do the small things with great love, develop a pure and disinterested love in your relationships.

St. Isidore the Worker (1080-1172)



Birthplace: Madrid, Spain

Feast Day: May 15th

Canonization: 1622 by [Pope Gregory XV](#)

Patron Saint of: Farmers

Did you know? He was born near Madrid of very poor but very Christian parents who early inspired in him love for God and horror of sin. St. Isidore was employed as a labourer on a farm outside the city. He married Maria Torribia and God blessed them with a son. Many marvellous happenings accompanied his lifelong work in the fields and continued long after his holy death. He was favoured with celestial [visions](#) and, it is said, the [angels](#) sometimes helped him in his work in the fields. He depended totally on God and the help of the angels for his work and at times would produce the amount of work as three labourers put together. Saint Isidore would begin every day by going to Mass early in the morning. A fountain of water which the Saint caused to surge up by striking the ground still exists. Saint Isidore died some time after his wife; and forty years later his remains, which had been in extremely wet ground, were found incorrupt. They were taken into the Church of Saint Andrew and re-interred there; miracles have been countless and celestial music has often been heard at his tomb. He has protected the city of Seville, making himself visible occasionally; and the kings of Spain themselves urged his canonization.

Walking with St. Isidore the Worker: Go to Mass each day if you have the opportunity, pray while you work, don't waste time, be faithful in the small things, always share what you have with those in need.

TOOL FOR THE JOURNEY: A Litany of Saints

This is a sacred [prayer](#) which calls upon God and the intercession of our faith ancestors – the saints and holy people gone before us. It is often prayed on All Saints day but can be prayed any time in a group or alone. There are many variations and you might like to include saints who are particularly precious to you such as the name you might have taken at the Sacrament of Confirmation. This is an especially beautiful prayer to use during times when we as pilgrims are seeking guidance and grace from those who have walked the journey before us.

Cantor:

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy

God, the Father of Heaven
God the Son, Redeemer of the world
God the Holy Spirit
Holy Trinity, one God

Mother Mary
All you angels
Saint John the Baptist
Holy Joseph
All holy Disciples of the Lord
All holy Prophets
Saint Rose of Lima
Saint John of the Cross
Saint Ignatius of Loyola
Saint Francis Xavier
Saint John of Avila
Saint Teresa of Avila
Saint Rafael Arnaiz

People:

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy

Have mercy on us
Have mercy on us
Have mercy on us
Have mercy on us

Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us
Pray for us

Cantor:

Saint Maria of the Head
Saint Isadore the Worker
All holy men and women,
saints of God

Lord be merciful
From all evil
From all sin
From eternal death
By your coming
By your holy life
By your dying
By your rising
By your spirit

Lord be merciful
Guide your Holy Church
Protect your people
Keep us faithful
Bless your bishops
Our Holy Father
And all your ministers

People:

Pray for us
Pray for us

Pray for us

Save your people
Save your people
Save your people
Save your people
Save your people
Save your people
Save your people
Save your people

Hear our prayer
Hear our prayer
Hear our prayer
Hear our prayer
Hear our prayer
Hear our prayer

Cantor:

Lord Jesus Christ
Lord Jesus Christ
Lord Jesus Christ

Lamb of God
who takes away
the sins of the world

Lamb of God
who takes away
the sins of the world

Lamb of God
who takes away
the sins of the world

*Glory Be to the Father and to the
Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it
was in the beginning, is now and
ever shall be,
world without end
Amen*

People:

Hear our prayer
Hear our prayer
Hear our prayer

Spare us O Lord

Graciously hear us,

*Lord have mercy
on us.*