

May 2021 Columbine



We welcome the month of May as our gardens and the countryside burst into life. Lockdown is lifting and we in the UK can start to emerge from this extraordinary, Covid dominated year.

However other parts of the world are still in turmoil and our hearts are particularly with the people of the Indian subcontinent, homeland of Fathers Paul and Bineesh. See below the call of Pope Francis to say the Rosary each day for an end to the pandemic.



Jan and Kathy



Our Lady's Medjugorje message 25th April 2021:

"Dear children! Today I am calling you to witness your faith in the colours of spring. May this be a faith of hope and courage. May your faith, little children, not waver in any situation, not even in this time of trial. Go courageously with the Risen Christ towards Heaven, which is your goal. I am accompanying you on this way of holiness and am placing all of you in my Immaculate Heart. Thank you for having responded to my call."

Our beloved dead

John Wright	1 May 98
Veronica Campbell	8 May 2020
Josie Coe	17 May 06
Samuel Joseph Doyle	24 May
Christine Finnegan	25 May 2020

Saying the Rosary to end the pandemic

We can join with Pope Francis and say daily Rosaries for the end of the pandemic. The Pope will be joining 30 shrines across the world throughout the month of May, with a different intention to be prayed for each day. **The marathon begins on Saturday 1st May, at our own national shrine of the Basilica of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk.**

In this edition:

On **page 2** we find out a little more about saints who have feast days this month: St. Rita of Cascia and St. Bede

On **page 3** we have an article on the Shrine of Our Lady of Grace in Ipswich

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Why is May the month of Our Lady?

May has traditionally been dedicated to Our Lady and certainly anyone who went to a Catholic school will remember crowning a statue of Our Lady with a wreath of flowers and processions singing Marian songs. This has been happening in the British Isles since the 13th century although the devotion didn't really become popular until the 19th century. The practice became common among the members of the Jesuit Order in Rome and because of the far reach of the order's schools, the devotion took hold, and by the 1700's it began to spread worldwide.

Shrine of Our Lady of Grace in Ipswich

Ipswich today is comparatively unknown as a destination for pilgrims, but for hundreds of years up to the sixteenth century a constant flow of people came to the shrine of Our Lady of Grace, and there were widely circulated accounts of miracles associated with the statue there. There is a modern plaque marking the site on Lady Lane in Ipswich [the lane between the back of the Wolsey theatre and Westgate Street] The statue disappeared during the reformation , its destruction ordered when the shrine was demolished during the dissolution of the monasteries. The names of the surrounding streets remain to indicate the various religious houses and a large number of mediaeval churches or buildings are still with us.



A wooden statue of the Madonna and Child displayed in the local church of the Italian seaside town of Nettuno closely matches various descriptions of the Ipswich statue. The statue is known locally as "Our Lady of Grace" or "The English Lady". Radio carbon dating places the era when the tree was felled to provide the wood of which the statue is carved at circa 1280 to 1420 with 94% certainty.

There is also evidence in the Nettuno archives that a statue arrived there from Ipswich in 1550. It was classified as being in the English iconic style in 1938 by Martin Gillett, an historian of 13th century iconography. Although the statue had been altered (a throne had been replaced and the posture of the Christ child had changed), details such as the folds in the material and Christ's position on the right rather than the left knee suggest that the statue came from England.

There is a replica of the statue at St. Mary at the Elms in Elm Street, Ipswich, which is now the Shrine of Our Lady of Grace. In non pandemic times there is an annual Meryemana procession to the church in early September. This annual commemoration was first ordered by Cardinal Wolsey in 1528, and it begins at his Ipswich College, near St. Peter's church, ending at the Shrine of Our Lady of Grace in St. Mary at the Elms.



Jan writes about the local churches dedicated to Our Lady:

"The view from my sofa is dominated by Capel St Mary parish church and I have spent much of lockdown comforted by the presence of this ancient building. There was probably a church here during the Black Death and later during the outbreaks of plague in the 16th and 17th centuries....It is amazing to think of the thousands prayers, masses and other services said and sung in this one building and the ancestors who spent their lives here and are now lying in the churchyard.

As with many pre-reformation churches it is dedicated to Our Lady - to Mary Virgin and Mother and a little research has shown that the majority of rural churches in this area are also dedicated to St Mary. Also under Our Lady's protections are the following churches:

East Bergholt , Holton St Mary, Highham and Raydon , Shotley, Tattingstone, Wherstead, Erwarton, Harkstead, Washbrook and Belstead

In the Middle Ages many of them would have been visited by pilgrims on their way to the Shrine of Our Lady of Ipswich. Apparently the wooden entrance door to St. Mary's in Capel bears scratches that pilgrims made as a sign that they had been there. They would have visited the churches dedicated to Our Lady along their route to Ipswich."

Saints we commemorate in May

St Rita of Cascia - feast day May 22nd

St. Rita lived during the 14th and 15th century in Italy. She was married at an early age to an abusive husband. Their marriage lasted more than 18 years, and she was a model wife who prayed constantly for her spouse. Even after her husband died in a feud, she discouraged her sons from trying to seek revenge. Following their death from dysentery, Rita entered the Augustinian convent in Cascia.

Today, St. Rita is known as the patron saint for abused women, mourning wives and impossible causes. Many women turn to her during times of despair, after a death in the family or even after a divorce. She is often depicted in artwork and on medals in a religious sister's habit, with roses or a rose crown.

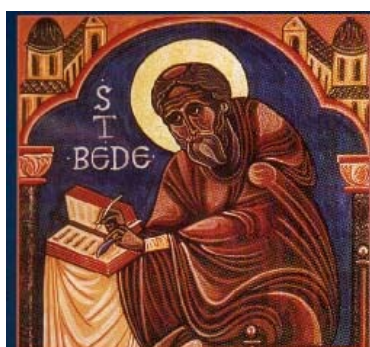


More About St. Rita

St. Rita of Cascia is a unique saint, in that during her life she was a wife, a mother, and later, a nun. Many saints we learn about were called by God to either marriage and children or the consecrated religious life; however, there have been some throughout time who have been blessed with living out both vocations. St. Rita is one such saint.

St. Rita died peacefully on May 22, 1457. The bells in the church in Cascia began to sound on their own, without the help of human hands. As the nuns prepared for her burial in a simple wooden coffin, the carpenter lamented that had he not suffered a stroke he would have been able to make a more beautiful coffin in which to lay such a holy woman. Soon after speaking these words, the carpenter was healed, and he was able to carve an ornate and elaborately decorated coffin to be the final resting place of St. Rita's body. Yet, she was never buried in it. Soon after her death she was kept on display, as so many local people came to look on the face of the "Peacemaker of Cascia." As her burial became more and more delayed, it was noticed that St. Rita's remains were not suffering nature's usual course of decay; rather, her body was perfectly preserved as though she had just passed away. To this day the body of St. Rita is on display in a glass enclosure in the basilica in Cascia.

St. Bede - feast day May 26th



Bede, also known as Saint Bede, The Venerable Bede, and Bede the Venerable, was an English Benedictine monk at the monastery of St. Peter and its companion monastery of St. Paul in the Kingdom of Northumbria of the Angles. He was born in Jarrow and was buried at Durham Cathedral in 735 AD. In 1899 he was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIII.

Nothing is known of Bede's parentage. At the age of seven he was taken to the monastery of St. Peter at Wearmouth near Sunderland, which had been founded by Abbot St. Benedict Biscop, into whose care he was entrusted. By 685AD he was moved to Biscop's newer monastery, of St. Paul, at Jarrow. Bede was ordained a deacon when he was 19 years old and became a priest at the age of 30. Apart from visits to Lindisfarne and York, he seems never to have left Wearmouth and Jarrow. Buried at Jarrow, his remains were removed to Durham and are now entombed in the Galilee Chapel of Durham Cathedral.

In 731/732 Bede completed his *Historia ecclesiastica*. Divided into five books, it recorded events in Britain from the raids by Julius Caesar (55–54 BC) to the arrival in Kent (597 AD) of St. Augustine of Canterbury. For his sources, he claimed the authority of ancient letters, the "traditions of our forefathers," and his own knowledge of contemporary events. Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* leaves gaps tantalizing to secular historians. Although overloaded with the miraculous, it is the work of a scholar anxious to assess the accuracy of his sources and to record only what he regarded as trustworthy evidence. It remains an indispensable source for some of the facts and much of the feel of early Anglo-Saxon history.

Some things to make you smile....

**STUDY FINDS
PARENTS CAN
DO $\frac{1}{3}$ OF
THEIR KIDS'
MATHS, BUT
STRUGGLE WITH
THE OTHER $\frac{3}{4}$**



And some more gems from Children's letters to God

“How did you know you were God?” Charlene

“Dear God are you really invisible or is that just a trick?” Lucy

“Dear God did you mean for the giraffe to look like that or was it an accident?” Norma

“Dear God instead of letting people die and having to make new ones why don't you just keep the ones you got now?” Jane

“Dear God who draws the lines around the countries?” Nan

“Dear God I like the Lords prayer best of all. Did you have to write it a lot or did you get it right the first time? I have to write everything I ever write over again.” Lois

“God it's ok that you made different religions but don't you get mixed up sometimes?” Arnold

“Dear God in Bible times did they really talk that fancy?” Jennifer