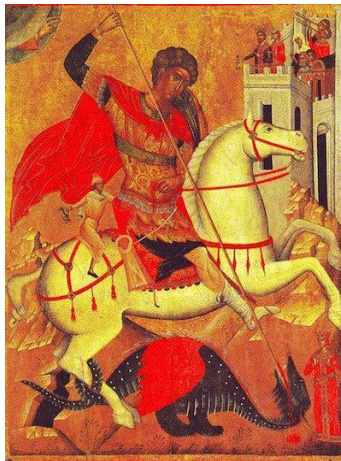




## April 2026 - Calendar / Feast Days

- 1 April - Wednesday in Holy Week – Spy Wednesday
- 2 April - Holy Thursday
- 3 April - Good Friday
- 4 April - Holy Saturday
- 5 April - Easter Sunday
- 12 April - Second Sunday of Easter
- 19 April - Third Sunday of Easter
- 23 April: - St. George
- 25 April: - St. Mark, Evangelist
- 26 April - Fourth Sunday of Easter
- 28 April - St. Louis de Montfort
- 29 April: - St. Catherine of Siena, Doctor of the Church, Patron of Europe

### St. George



**St. George** was a Roman soldier who became a Christian and refused to renounce his faith during persecution under Emperor Diocletian.

He was executed for his beliefs, becoming a **martyr**. Over time, legends grew—most famously, the story of him slaying a dragon, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil. He died: c. 303 AD. He is the **patron saint of England**

## St. Mark



**St. Mark** is traditionally believed to be the author of the **Gospel of Mark**, one of the four Gospels in the Bible. He lived in the 1st century. He was closely connected with the preaching of Saints Peter, Paul and Barnabas.

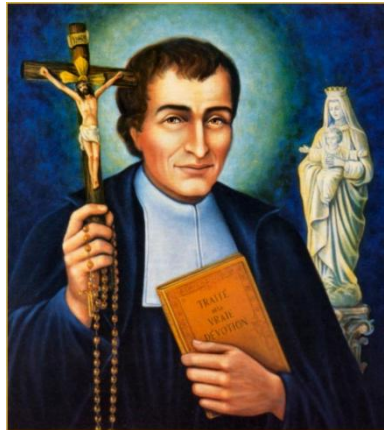
He was a close companion of **St. Peter** and helped spread Christianity in the early Church. According to tradition, he later became the bishop of Alexandria in Egypt.

His symbol is the **winged lion**, and he is the patron saint of Venice.



## Mark, the Evangelist, one of the four Gospel writers in the New Testament.

### St. Louis de Montfort



#### **Early Life (1673–1692)**

Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort was born on January 31, 1673, in Montfort-sur-Meu. He grew up in a large, devout Catholic family. From a young age, he showed a deep love for prayer, especially devotion to the Virgin Mary.

He attended school in Rennes, where he excelled academically and developed a strong sense of religious calling. Even as a student, he lived simply and gave generously to the poor.

#### **Priesthood and Missionary Work (1700–1716)**

After studying theology in Paris, Louis was ordained a priest in 1700. Instead of seeking comfort or prestige, he chose a difficult path—serving the poor and preaching missions in rural France.

He became known for:

- Powerful, passionate preaching
- Deep devotion to Mary
- Living in poverty and humility
- Renewing faith in struggling communities

Montfort often faced opposition from church authorities and local leaders because of his intense style and strict spirituality. Despite this, he continued travelling from village to village, preaching and helping the poor.

## **Devotion to Mary**

One of his greatest contributions to Christianity is his teaching on Marian devotion. His most famous work, *True Devotion to Mary*, explains a path of total consecration to Jesus through Mary.

He emphasized:

- Giving oneself completely to God through Mary
- Trusting in Mary as a spiritual guide
- Living a life of humility and surrender

This spirituality later deeply influenced figures like Pope John Paul II, whose motto “*Totus Tuus*” came directly from Montfort’s teaching.

## **Founding Religious Communities**

Montfort founded:

- The Company of Mary (Montfort Missionaries)
- The Daughters of Wisdom (with Marie Louise Trichet)

These groups focused on:

- Teaching the faith
- Serving the poor
- Spreading devotion to Mary

## **Death and Legacy (1716–Present)**

Louis de Montfort died on April 28, 1716, in Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre at just 43 years old, worn out from years of missionary work.

He was later:

- Beatified in 1888
- Canonized in 1947 by Pope Pius XI

## **Lasting Impact**

Today, Saint Louis de Montfort is remembered for:

- His deep Marian spirituality
- His missionary zeal
- His influence on modern Catholic devotion

His writings—especially *True Devotion to Mary*—continue to inspire millions around the world.



## Saint Catherine of Siena



### **Early Life (1347–1363)**

Catherine was born on March 25, 1347, in Siena, during a time of political unrest and the aftermath of the Black Death.

She was the 25th child in her family (though many did not survive infancy). From a very young age, she showed extraordinary spiritual sensitivity. At just six years old, she experienced a vision of Christ, which deeply shaped her life.

Despite her parents' wishes for her to marry, Catherine chose a life dedicated entirely to God.

### **Religious Life and Mystical Experiences**

As a teenager, Catherine became a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic, living a life of prayer, fasting, and service while remaining at home.

She became known for:

- Intense prayer and mystical visions
- Acts of charity toward the sick and poor
- Deep humility and self-discipline

She is said to have experienced a “mystical marriage” with Christ and later received the stigmata (marks of Christ’s wounds), though these were often described as invisible.

## Public Mission and Influence (1370s)

Though she began in solitude, Catherine was eventually called into public life.

- She became a powerful spiritual leader who:
- Wrote hundreds of letters to rulers and church leaders
- Urged reform within the Church
- Worked for peace among warring Italian cities

Most famously, she played a key role in persuading Pope Gregory XI to return the papacy from Avignon back to Rome in 1377, ending the period known as the Avignon Papacy.

## Writings

Catherine's most important work is *The Dialogue*, a profound conversation between the soul and God.

Her writings focus on:

- God's love and mercy
- The importance of virtue
- Total trust in divine providence

Despite having little formal education, her writings are considered theological masterpieces.



## Death and Canonization (1380–1970)

Catherine died on April 29, 1380, in Rome at just 33 years old, after intense spiritual and physical suffering.

She was later:

- Canonized in 1461 by Pope Pius II
- Declared a Doctor of the Church in 1970 by Pope Paul VI

## Legacy

Saint Catherine of Siena is remembered for:

- Her fearless voice in Church reform
- Deep mystical union with God
- Service to the sick and poor

She is the patron saint of:

- Italy (alongside Saint Francis of Assisi)
- Europe

Catherine's life stands out because she combined deep contemplation with bold action, influencing popes and politics while remaining rooted in prayer.

## *Prayers for Peace*

***Lord God, King of peace,***  
*look with mercy upon our world amid war.*

*Where there is violence, bring an end to bloodshed.*  
*Where there is hatred, soften hearts.*  
*Where there is fear, grant courage and protection.*

*Watch over the innocent—*  
*the children, the families, the displaced, and the wounded.*  
*Be near to those who mourn, and comfort all who suffer loss.*

*Guide leaders and decision-makers toward wisdom,*  
*justice, and the desire for peace over power.*

*Strengthen those who risk their lives to protect others,*  
*and call all people away from vengeance and toward reconciliation.*

*Make us instruments of Your peace—*  
*to bring kindness where there is cruelty,*  
*hope where there is despair,*  
*and light in the darkest places.*

*We place our trust in You,*  
*believing that even in war,*  
*Your love has the final word.*

*Amen.*



***O God of peace and mercy,***  
*in these troubled and uncertain times,*  
*we turn to You with humble hearts.*

*Calm our fears, quiet our anxieties,*  
*and fill us with Your steady peace*  
*that no storm can shake.*

*Where there is hatred, sow love.*  
*Where there is fear, bring courage.*  
*Where there is division, create unity.*  
*Where there is darkness, let Your light shine.*

*Guide our leaders with wisdom,*  
*protect the vulnerable and suffering,*  
*and strengthen all who work for justice and peace.*

*Help us to be instruments of Your peace*  
*in our homes, our communities, and the world.*

*Give us patience in hardship,*  
*hope in despair,*  
*and faith that You are always near.*

*We entrust all our worries to You,*  
*knowing that Your love is greater than all troubles.*

*Amen.*

***O Mary, Queen of Peace,***  
*Watch over our world.*  
*Comfort those who suffer,*  
*Protect the innocent,*

*And guide all hearts away from violence.  
Pray for us,  
That peace may fill the earth.  
Amen*

