

August 16, 2021

Good Morning All,

Back to School for our teachers and students! Please say a prayer for them today as they begin their new year.

For the Teachers:

O Lord my God, thank you that you are the source of all true joy in life. Help me to teach others well. Guide my thoughts, words and actions to enable me to carry out this important work that you have placed before me. Increase my faith that anything is possible in your power. Let the majesty of the Father be the light that guides me, the compassion of the Son be the love that inspires me and the presence of the Spirit be the power that empowers me. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

For the Students:

All-Knowing God, thank you that you possess infinite riches of wisdom, goodness and power. You have said that if I accept your words, turn my ear to wisdom and apply my heart to understanding, then I will find the wisdom and knowledge of God. Remind me as I study, that everything I have is a gift from you. May the peace of God reign in my life, the love of God surround me, the Spirit of God empower me and the joy of God uphold me. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

1. Today's Readings: [Monday of the Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time | USCCB](#)
2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: The Church counts among its saints people of many nations and walks of life including kings and queens. St. Stephen of Hungary spread and encouraged the growth of the Catholic faith while he was king. Both he and his son were canonized the same day in 1083.

3. Quote of the Day:

~ "Be HUMBLE in this life,  
that God may raise you up in the next.  
Be truly MODERATE  
and do not punish or condemn anyone immoderately.  
Be GENTLE,  
so that you may never oppose justice.  
Be HONOURABLE,  
so that you may never voluntarily  
bring disgrace upon anyone.

Be CHASTE,  
so that you may avoid all the foulness of lust  
like the pangs of death.”

***St. Stephen of Hungary, Pray for Us!***  
***St. Joseph, Pray for Us!***

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Linda McCormick  
St. Joseph Catholic Church & School  
1200 Cornelia Road  
Anderson, SC 29621

Phone: (864) 225-5341, ext. 102  
Fax: (864) 225-6432



On Aug. 16, the Catholic Church celebrates the feast day of King Saint Stephen of Hungary, the monarch who led his country to embrace the Christian faith during the 11th century.

Before the future saint's birth in 975, his mother, the duchess Sarolt, is said to have received a vision in which the original Saint Stephen – the Church's first martyr – appeared telling her she would bear a son who would evangelize their land.

Together with her husband, the Hungarian duke Geza, Sarolt is believed to have been converted and baptized by the bishop Saint Adalbert of Prague. The same saint baptized their son Vaik in 985, giving him the name of Stephen.

Geza had desired to convert the Hungarians to the Catholic faith, a passion shared by Stephen once he reached adulthood and succeeded him in power. After conclusively defeating an alliance of rival pagan nobility, he used their acquired wealth to build a monastery, and invited clergy to convert the people.

Stephen established laws favoring Christianity over paganism and sent an emissary to Rome with a request for the Pope to proclaim him as king. Pope Sylvester II accepted the request, sending him a crown and a gold processional cross, while also giving Stephen certain religious privileges.

He showed great diligence as king, while devoting the rest of his time to his religious duties – including charity toward the poor and sick, as well as the worship of God – and to his household. Gisela, Stephen's wife, was the sister of the ruler later canonized as the Holy Roman Emperor Saint Henry II.

Greatly devoted to the Virgin Mary, Stephen had several churches built in her honor both in Hungary and outside the kingdom. Her intercession is credited with preventing a war between Hungary and the Holy Roman Empire under Conrad II and stopping an assassination plot against Stephen himself.

The Hungarian king also established a monastery in Jerusalem, and set up institutions to aid pilgrims in other major cities. Stephen counted saints among his friends and correspondents and fulfilled the Pope's charge to use his royal authority for the good of the Church.

Suffering came to the king, however, when only one of his children survived to adulthood. Stephen's only living son Emeric received a strong Catholic upbringing and was expected to succeed his father. But Emeric died before Stephen, after a hunting accident in 1031.

Emeric was later canonized as a saint in his own right, and Stephen eventually came to rejoice that his son had been permitted to enter God's presence before him. The king's final years, however, were marked by illness as well as a succession dispute among his relatives.

In 1038, on the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Stephen delivered his final words to leaders of the Church and state, telling them to protect and spread the Catholic faith.

To the Virgin Mary, the king directed one of his final prayers: "To thee, O Queen of heaven, and to thy guardianship, I commend the holy Church, all the bishops and the clergy, the whole kingdom, its rulers and inhabitants; but before all, I commend my soul to thy care."

St. Stephen of Hungary died on Aug. 15, 1038. He was buried alongside his son St. Emeric, and the two were canonized together in 1083.

*Source: catholicnewsagency.com*

