

Daily Parish Communication

October 12, 2022

Good Morning All,

Adoration following the morning Mass until 4:00 PM

Catholicism for Dummies at the Parish Office beginning at 1:30

First Communion Parents Meeting at the Hall beginning at 6:00

1. Today's Readings: [Wednesday of the Twenty-eighth Week in Ordinary Time | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: Pope St. Telesphorus is our 8th pope. There is some dispute about what he did or did not accomplish, but it is commonly accepted that he was a martyr.

3. Quote of the Day:

~ "Let us make up for lost time. Let us give to God the time that remains to us."
St. Alphonsus Liguori

Pope St. Telesphorus, Pray for Us!
St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

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Pope St. Telesphorus

(ca. 125 – 138 AD)

He was a man born, according to legend, in Terranova de Sibari, in Calabria. This is the toe of the “boot” of Italy. His name, translated from the Greek, means “accomplishing the goal”. He may have taken on the name when consecrating himself to God, at the time he was ordained, or maybe later. He is said to have served as Bishop of Rome from the twelfth year of the reign of Hadrian (128-129)

to the first year of Antonius Pius (138-139). Ireneus, writing at the end of that century, claims that Telesphorus died “a glorious martyrdom”.

Our saint was said to have been a monk, or an anchorite, living almost as a hermit somewhere outside his hometown. But, as most Christians, he was called to help his brethren. It is assumed that he helped them with their living conditions and also with their spiritual conditions. Some years before being consecrated bishop, he moved to Rome, the epicenter of thought.

In the first century and a half, no definitive dogma of Christianity was predominant. That Jesus died and rose was debated, along with his divinity and what the consecration intended. Docetism, one of the first questioning the apostolic teachings, claimed that Jesus’ physical appearance was just an illusion. This showed up soon after the Ascension. This explains, in part, why many of the Gospel stories talk about Jesus eating and drinking. However, the biggest problem was the argument that if Jesus did not have a physical body, then he could not have actually suffered and died for our sins, negating one of the first teachings of the Church. Some early gnostics claimed to “know”, through an internal reading of the heart or a mystical appearance of the Holy Spirit, how soon Jesus would come back, when the apocalypse would show, which books in the New Testament should be seen as valid. They tended to believe that the Old Testament was not representative of true belief, or the true God.

This was the environment in Rome when Telesphorus arrived. His past experiences had made him intelligent and disciplined. He spent his next years fighting these heresies.

In addition to this large problem for a still infant belief, the early Christians needed to separate themselves further from their Jewish brothers. A series of rebellions in the eastern frontiers of the Roman Empire had angered Emperor Hadrian. His wrath against the Jewish leaders made the sack of Jerusalem in 70AD look small. Whether correct or not, the Christian leaders chose to define the differences between themselves and the Jews on a number of matters, including making Sunday the Sabbath and moving Easter away from a weekday Passover to the Sunday near Passover. Those in the western part of the Empire were more willing than those in the eastern part. Telesphorus was willing to accept these differences during his time as bishop and remain in communion with the eastern bishops. It became a bigger problem by the end of the century.

Telesphorus is said to have begun the tradition of midnight Mass at Christmas, which is not likely because the first celebration is not mentioned until Clement of Alexandria in about 200. He is also said to have started the singing of the Gloria at that Mass. That is not likely, either. As pope, he is said to have established Lent as being seven weeks in length. Most historians suggest that the time before Easter was celebrated as a time of fast and abstinence, but of various lengths of time. Telesphorus may have codified the length of time.

St. Telesphorus died a martyr as is known not only from the “Liber Pontificalis” but also from the earlier testimony of St. Irenaeus. He was buried near St. Peter on the Vatican. His feast is kept on January 5 in the Roman liturgy and February 22 in the Greek.

Source: ucatholic.com and catholic365.com