

February 8, 2023

Good Morning!

~Special Notice: There will be no Masses, Confessions, or Adoration on Tuesday and Wednesday this week as Fr. Gillespie will be attending the Diocesan Priest Convocation.

A request from the Diocese....Please help with the messages to state representatives regarding the Blaine Amendment - [Take Action - South Carolina Catholic Conference - SC \(sccatholicconference.org\)](https://www.sccatholicconference.org)

Catholicism for Dummies Class, Church Office at 1:30

First Holy Communion Parents Meeting, Parish Hall, 6:30

1. Today's Readings: [Wednesday of the Fifth Week in Ordinary Time | USCCB](#)
2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: This day the Church remembers 2 saints: St. Josephine Bakhita (who we have covered twice) and St. Jerome Emiliani who the article today describes. What does his memory mean for us today?
3. Quotes of the Day: St. Jerome Emiliani

~"For God,...does not work in those who refuse to place all their confidence and hope in Him alone. But He does impart the fullness of His love upon those who possess a deep faith and hope; for them He does great things."

~"If you remain constant in your faith in the face of trial, the Lord will give you peace and rest for a time in this world, and forever in the next."

~"Therefore, having done what you could, the Lord will be satisfied with you because for Him, who is the most benign, goodwill compensates for the lack of success."

St. Jerome Emiliani, Pray for Us!
St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

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What St. Jerome Emiliani Can Teach Us Today?



Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, "St. Jerome Emiliani," 1759 (photo: Public Domain)

St. Jerome Emiliani (1486-1537) was a Venetian soldier and public official turned humanitarian, priest, and religious founder.

What does he have to say to us today?

Some saints have a close friendship with Christ from youth. Others take a while to get there. Jerome started life with very earthly aims. He was a soldier who was taken prisoner. Like St. Ignatius, who would find God about 15 years later during enforced convalescence following a battlefield injury, Jerome's enforced imprisonment likewise caused him to do some reckoning. He attributed his miraculous escape from jail to Our Lady and so began to focus more on the religious side of his life. Today's young people, struggling to find faith, might take example from Jerome.

About 10 years later, in 1518, Jerome Emiliani was ordained a priest. He had been and continued dedicating himself to works of charity, with particular focus on the sick and on abandoned youth.

After his escape from prison, Jerome spent some time attending to the education of his nephews. That contact with young people stayed. As a priest, Emiliani devoted himself to the sick and to orphans. That became a particular focus in 1528 and afterwards. A plague hit parts of northern Italy that year, the ensuing mortality multiplying the orphan population. In the next four years, Jerome Emiliani would trek around that part of Italy, founding hospitals, orphanages, and a home for reformed prostitutes. Jerome's faith showed itself in good works (James 2:18). Catholics today wondering amid the wonders of modern medicine how to deal with a pandemic should not think themselves alone: Jerome trod that road, and without many of the benefits modern man enjoys. Jerome Emiliani had to cope with disease "overwhelming" the health care system, because the latter didn't exist — he addressed the need by founding hospitals.

Lots of good is done on an ad hoc basis, and that should not be taken as any minimization of those good works. After all, we don't clothe "the poor" but this homeless man with no winter coat. We don't feed "the hungry" but that little boy that had nothing to eat today. Jerome Emiliani did that.

But good work also sometimes has to be put on a more institutionalized foundation, especially so that it might continue. Jerome did that, too, when he founded the "Clerics Regular of Somasca" or, simply, the Somascan Fathers, to continue working with orphans, abandoned children and the sick. The order takes its name from Somasca, a beautiful little town sitting on Lake Como, where Jerome Emiliani founded the community in 1534.

Jesus promised his disciples he would not "leave you orphans" (John 14:18). Jerome took Jesus at his word.

Jerome died in 1537, probably from a disease he contracted in the course of his ministries. Tradition has it that, on his deathbed, Jerome traced a red cross on the wall to contemplate it, the center of his ministry. Again, Jerome speaks to a COVID-19 world where isolation protocols driven by fear of death seem to trump all other considerations. Emiliani did not hesitate to reach out, even at the cost of his life,

providing an example that physical survival alone was not the be-all-and-end-all of his life.

Pope Clement XIII canonized him in 1767.

Our artistic depiction of St. Jerome Emiliani dates from that time. The 18th-century northern Italian artist Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo produced this oil painting of St. Jerome Emiliani with a young boy.

Jerome looks heavenwards because God was always his compass in his ministry. His left arm is placed on the shoulder of a young boy — probably an orphan or otherwise abandoned child — who despite the concern on his face puts his trust in Jerome that he will not be abandoned. The boy holds a book, illustrative of Jerome's intent to prepare his children for their lives ahead. In Jerome's right hand, he holds a sword, symbolic of his first avocation that led to his ultimate vocation. The sword may also indicate Jerome's intent to defend his abandoned charges.

Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo painted this depiction in 1780, i.e., in the years immediately after Emiliani's canonization where the saint's fame and popularity were better known. Tiepolo's younger brother belonged to the Somascan Fathers. Both Emiliani and Tiepolo came from northern Italy, where devotion to local-boy-made-saint was also probably strong. Perhaps it's fitting he painted it: most people know Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, his renowned artist father, and his brother, Lorenzo. It struck me that the child of the great painter was the one who produced this painting of the patron of children and the patron of abandoned children.

Tiepolo was a painter but, in time, shifted also to etchings and prints. He also moved away from religious to secular subjects, one of his most famous series of works being sketches of Pulcinello (Punch and Judy).

Our day yearns for service to the poor and vulnerable. St. Jerome Emiliani embodies that mission.

This work is held in the Ca'Rezzonico Museum, on the Grand Canal in Venice.

Source: ncregister.com