

April 26, 2023

Good Morning!

Adoration following the morning Mass till 4:00 PM.

Taste of St. Joseph - Saturday after Mass! Don't forget to get your tickets! \$15 per adult - All You Can Eat; Children \$5 and Children under 4 are Free. Call the school 760-1619 for more information!

Veritas Catholic Information Center - see the link for some upcoming events right around the corner! [RSVP for upcoming Veritas CIC Events \(campaign-archive.com\)](https://campaign-archive.com) Plans are continuing on the build out of the new downtown location. I will pass along when I get more information!

1. Today's Readings: [Wednesday of the Third Week of Easter | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: Our last episode on the popes discussed Prince Alberic and how he influenced several of the popes. Today again we see his influence on the papacy, including the forcing of his son to be elected. Not a good decision for the Church. Yet, we must remember that although some popes were very immoral, they did not teach wrong doctrines. Thus, Our Lord protected His Church from error despite the poor quality of some of those who led her.

3. Quote of the Day: God provides answers through His Word - remember to read and listen for God's messages to you when you pray for his help.

~"After Jesus spent the day of His Resurrection teaching the Bible while walking seven miles in the afternoon (Lk 24:25), the early Christians got the message that God's Word was extremely important." *One Bread, One Body*

St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

--

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

Phone: (864) 225-5341

Fax: (864) 225-6432

Popes of the mid 900s, part 2

130. Agapetus II (946-55)

Born around 905, Agapetus was one of the longest reigning popes, ruling nine and one-half years. Son of a Roman father and a Greek mother, he lived his life mostly in Rome. By the time he was forty, he had become cardinal deacon. At some point, he attracted the attention of the current Roman dictator, Alberic II, who completely controlled the independent city-state of Rome.

When Pope Marinus II died, Agapetus was nominated for the now-empty seat of Peter by Alberic. On May 10, 946, Agapetus was elected pope. This election put Agapetus in a peculiar position. As pope, Agapetus should have been controlling the religious and political aspects of the Papal States. Alberic ruled so tightly, that all Agapetus was able to do was attempt to wrest a modicum of ecclesiastical discipline from the churches and cloisters which had become decadent.

Agapetus was a wise and pious administrator, and this is where he shined. The major players in this scenario were King Otto of Germany, King Louis IV of France, Berengar II and Hugh of Arles, who both claimed to be king of Italy. Italy was constantly in chaos due to the two Italian claimants and their constantly shifting allies. Hugh died in 947, leaving Berengar to fight.

Monasteries in Italy and Germany had been deprived of their lands and buildings as dukes and counts laughed at the rights of the Church. Agapetus pushed to reestablish the monasteries' holdings, especially in Beneventum and Capua, Italy. In Germany, the pope granted sweeping control of the Church to Otto of Germany in exchange for sending priests and bishops, consecrated by the king rather than the pope, to Denmark. In that pagan country, and soon, other Scandinavian countries, the Good News was spread for the first time. King Otto and Pope Agapetus became good friends over this.

Rival claimants of the bishopric of Reims fought in two synods before who was the real bishop was sorted out.

By 951, the chaos in Italy had become of such concern to the rule of Rome, Alberic, that he asked Agapetus to use his power of persuasion to get Otto to cross the Alps and help out the Italians. Otto did arrive, but late, having to squelch a rebellion begun by his own son. Yet, when Otto's personal negotiators arrived ahead of him,

Alberic would not receive them. In an unstable agreement, Berengar became Otto's vassal in 952. But it did not last long.

Within a few years, Berengar's troops attacked the Papal States, and Rome, itself, right around the time that Alberic was dying. Fearful of his legacy, Alberic forced the pope and the nobles of Rome to guarantee their support of Octavian, Alberic's son, as the next pope. The problem was that Octavian was not much of a Christian and was only 18.

Agapetus died soon after Alberic, in the late fall of 955. He died at the relatively young age of 50. Pope Agapetus was buried in the Lateran basilica near the tombs of Popes Leo V and Paschall II. And Octavian came to sit on the Chair of Peter.

Source: catholic365.com

131. John XII (955-63)

Considered one of the worst of the popes, Octavian, son of Alberic II of Spoleto, was the spoiled child of the Dark Ages. He was born sometime between 930 and 937 in the neighborhood of Via Lata.

Being the only surviving son, the father, Alberic wanted the best for him. Around 954, Alberic, reigning ruler of Rome, administered an oath to Roman nobles at St. Peter's providing that the next papal vacancy would be filled by Octavian. He had just entered the Church service, becoming a cardinal-deacon at Santa Maria in Dominica. The next year, Alberic died, leaving his position as prince of Romans to Octavian. Not many months later, Pope Agapetus II died. True to their oath, the Romans elected this young man to the papacy. He was consecrated on December 16, 955.

The first few years of his papacy, Octavian, who took the name John, busied himself with Church work and fun. His favorite things were wine, women, song, gambling and torture. He took oaths to the Devil and enjoyed the company of women of loose morals.

His papal legate to Germany, William of Mayence, was asked to inform him of the goings on in both West Francia and Germany. In other words, spy for him. He granted the pallium to Henry the new archbishop of Trier and encouraged him to live a good life. He granted privileges to Subiaco Abbey, provided the monks say

one hundred Kyrie Eleisons and Christe Eleisons a day for his welfare and pray three Masses a week for him.

Around 960, John personally let an attack against the Lombard-held duchies of Beneventum and Capua, which had belonged to the papal lands. The dukes of those towns asked for help from Gisulf I of Salerno, who came to their aide. John was a wily man. He negotiated with Gisulf and they came to a conclusion. If Gisulf did not interfere, Salerno would no longer be a papal patrimony, saving Gisulf much money.

Berengar II, king of Italy soon came south to attack the papal territory. John sent for help to Otto of Germany. Otto arrived in Italy and Berengar retreated from the territory. Otto marched into Rome on 31 January 962. He swore an oath that he would do everything to defend the pope. John crowned him emperor and swore, in his turn, to be faithful to Otto and to not provide aid to Berengar or to his son Adalbert. The emperor became the guarantor of independence of the Papal States, confirmed the freedom of papal elections, with the right to agree to the election before the consecration. But he also insisted on the old *Constitutio Romana*, restricting papal temporal power. While there, John convened a synod to grant palliums and establish several German archbishoprics. Just before he left to go chase down Berengar, Otto advised John to give up his licentious lifestyle. John was going to have none of that.

Otto was able to drive Berengar out of the Papal States and eventually capture him. John became frightened of Otto's power. He decided to find allies by sending legates to the Magyars and the Byzantine emperor. Unfortunately, Otto captured them and heard their story. So, he sent his own men to Rome to find out what was happening. John made up a story about reforming the papal court in response.

The next year, Otto found out that Adalbert was in Rome for discussions. Otto returned to the city and besieged it. John attempted to defend the city, but merely pushed the attacking troops across the river. Realizing he was no match for the emperor's army, he and Adalbert stole the papal treasures and escaped to Tibur, 30 miles away.

The emperor summoned a council and asked John to return and defend himself. John's response was a threat of excommunication to anyone who testified against him. Then he went hunting. The council deposed John and elected Leo VIII.

Within months, the Romans revolted, supporting John. Otto put the revolt down harshly, killing many. John returned with his own army and supporters. This was too much for Leo, who fled to Otto. John, declaring himself still pope, organized a synod. The synod proclamation was that the deposing was uncanonical, and he went back on the throne.

John died in a lover's arms, in May of 964. Whether he had a stroke that paralyzed him or was beaten by a jealous husband is unknown.

Source: catholic365.com