



<b>Saint Joseph's, Saint Anne's &amp; Holy Family And Saint Patrick's</b> <b>21<sup>st</sup> of December 2025, Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year A</b>
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**Catholic Sunday Mass Readings for The 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025, Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year A**

1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Isaiah 7:10-14
Responsorial Psalm	Psalms 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	Romans 1:1-7
Alleluia	Matthew 1:23
Gospel	Matthew 1:18-24

**1st Reading - Isaiah 7:10-14**

10 The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying:  
 11 Ask for a sign from the LORD, your God; let it be deep as the netherworld, or high as the sky!  
 12 But Ahaz answered, "I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!"  
 13 Then Isaiah said: Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary people, must you also weary my God?  
 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.

**Responsorial Psalm - Psalms 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6**

R. (7c and 10b) Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.  
 1 The LORD's are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it.  
 2 For he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

3 Who can ascend the mountain of the LORD? or who may stand in his holy place?  
 4 One whose hands are sinless, whose heart is clean, who desires not what is vain.

R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

5 He shall receive a blessing from the LORD, a reward from God his saviour.  
 6 Such is the race that seeks for him, that seeks the face of the God of Jacob.

R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

**2nd Reading - Romans 1:1-7**

1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God,  
 2 which he promised previously through his prophets in the holy Scriptures,  
 3 the gospel about his Son, descended from David according to the flesh,  
 4 but established as Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness through resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
 5 Through him we have received the grace of apostleship, to bring about the obedience of faith, for the sake of his name, among all the Gentiles,  
 6 among whom are you also, who are called to belong to Jesus Christ;  
 7 to all the beloved of God in Rome, called to be holy. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Alleluia - Matthew 1:23**

R. Alleluia, alleluia.  
 23 The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel.  
 R. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Gospel - Matthew 1:18-24**

18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit.  
 19 Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly.  
 20 Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.  
 21 She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."  
 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:  
 23 Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."  
 24 When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

**Saint Of The Day**

St Peter Canisius, born on The 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1521, in Nijmegen, was a Dutch Jesuit Catholic priest known for his pivotal role in defending and revitalizing the Catholic Church during the Protestant Reformation. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1543 and became a leading figure in the Counter-Reformation, especially in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. St Peter Canisius was renowned for his preaching, theological writings, and the founding of educational institutions, including the University of Innsbruck. He died on The 21<sup>st</sup> Of December, 1597, in Fribourg, Switzerland. His feast day is celebrated on The 21<sup>st</sup> December. Canisius was beatified in 1864 and canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1925, who also declared him a Doctor of the Church.

**St Peter Canisius Biography**




**St Peter Canisius - Feast Day - On the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

<b>Date of Birth</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> May 1521
<b>Place of Birth</b>	Netherlands in Asia
<b>Profession</b>	Priest
<b>Place of Work</b>	Germany and Fribourg, Switzerland
<b>Date of Death</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> December 1597
<b>Place of Death</b>	Fribourg, Switzerland
<b>Feast Day</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> December
<b>Beatification</b>	By Pope Pius IX in 1864 in Rome
<b>Canonization</b>	By Pope Pius XI on The 21 <sup>st</sup> May 21 1925 in Rome
<b>Patron Saint of</b>	Catholic press, Germany

**St Peter Canisius Life History**

St Peter Canisius, born in 1521 in Nijmegen, in the Duchy of Guelders (modern-day Netherlands), grew up during a turbulent period for the Catholic Church. His early life coincided with the onset of the Protestant Reformation, which dramatically reshaped the religious landscape of Europe. Raised in a devout Catholic family, Canisius displayed early signs of brilliance and piety, leading him to pursue higher education. He was sent to the University of Cologne, one of the leading academic institutions of the time, where he earned a Master's degree in 1540 at just 19 years old. While studying in Cologne, Canisius encountered Peter Faber, a pivotal figure in his life. Faber was one of the founding members of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), a newly formed religious

Order committed to education, missionary work, and defending the Catholic faith. Through Faber's influence, Canisius became deeply inspired by the Jesuit ideals and, in 1543, became the first Dutchman to join the Society of Jesus. As a Jesuit, Peter Canisius quickly emerged as a key figure in the Counter-Reformation, a movement within the Catholic Church aimed at combating the spread of Protestantism and revitalizing Catholicism. His work focused primarily on areas like Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, and Switzerland - regions where Protestant influence had gained a strong foothold. The Catholic Church's restoration in these areas, following the upheavals of the Reformation, is largely attributed to Canisius and the efforts of the Jesuit order. His intellectual rigor, combined with his dedication to the Catholic cause, made him one of the most effective Catholic leaders of his time. In 1557, Canisius participated in the Colloquy of Worms as one of the chief Catholic theologians. The Colloquy was an attempt to reconcile differences between Catholics and Protestants, although it ultimately failed to achieve this. Nevertheless, Canisius' involvement solidified his reputation as a leading defender of Catholic doctrine. He became known not only for his theological prowess but also for his practical efforts to restore the Catholic Church in the wake of Protestantism's rise. From 1559 to 1568, Canisius served as the primary preacher at the Cathedral of Augsburg, a position of immense influence. During this period, he preached with great zeal, often giving three or four sermons each week, and was renowned for his ability to connect with ordinary people. His sermons were not only theological discourses but also calls to personal conversion and renewal of faith. Through his efforts, many who had drifted away from the Church were brought back to Catholicism. His preaching style was engaging and accessible, making him a popular figure among both clergy and laity. Beyond his preaching, Canisius was instrumental in promoting Catholic education. In 1562, he founded a college in Innsbruck that would later evolve into the University of Innsbruck, an institution that continues to be a centre for Catholic education and learning. His dedication to education was a cornerstone of his Jesuit mission, as he believed that knowledge and faith were deeply intertwined. He also authored numerous catechisms, which became widely used throughout Europe, especially in German-speaking regions. These catechisms were designed to educate both children and adults in the core tenets of the Catholic faith, countering Protestant theological arguments with clarity and precision. Despite his rigorous work, Canisius' later years were marked by physical hardship. In 1591, at the age of 70, he suffered a stroke that left him partially paralyzed. However, his spirit remained undeterred, and he continued to preach and write with the help of a secretary. His dedication to his mission never wavered, and he remained active in his ministry until his death on December 21, 1597, in Fribourg, Switzerland. Even in his weakened state, Canisius' commitment to his faith and the Catholic Church was unwavering, earning him deep admiration from his peers and followers. Initially, Canisius was buried in the Church of St. Nicholas, but his remains were later transferred to the church of the Jesuit College in Fribourg, which he had founded and where he had spent his final year. His grave, located in front of the main altar of the church, became a site of pilgrimage. The room where he spent his last months was transformed into a chapel, which remains open today for the veneration of the faithful. Peter Canisius is venerated in the Catholic Church as a saint, and in recognition of his immense contributions to theology and the defense of the Catholic faith, he was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1925 by Pope Pius XI. This title is reserved for saints whose writings and teachings have had a significant and lasting impact on the Church. Canisius' writings, particularly his catechisms, remain influential to this day, providing a clear and concise explanation of Catholic doctrine. One of Canisius' lesser-known contributions is his work in promoting devotion to the

Virgin Mary. He published an applied Mariology for preachers, in which he described Mary with tender and affectionate words, emphasizing her role as a compassionate mother and intercessor. He actively supported the establishment of Marian sodalities and rosary associations, encouraging the faithful to deepen their devotion to Mary as a means of strengthening their Catholic identity. His theological defence of Catholic Mariology helped shape the Church's understanding of Mary and her role in salvation history. Today, the feast day of Saint Peter Canisius is celebrated on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December, the anniversary of his death. His life and work continue to inspire Catholics around the world, particularly in the fields of education, preaching, and the promotion of Marian devotion. Through his tireless efforts to restore the Catholic Church during one of its most challenging periods, Peter Canisius remains a shining example of faith, dedication, and perseverance.

### Other Saints of the Day

Blessed Anton Durcovici

Saint Anrê Tran An Dung

### Blessed Dominic Spadafora

Blessed Dominic Spadafora was born in 1450 in Randazzo, Sicily. He studied at Padua, Italy and joined the Dominicans at the St Zita priory in Palermo, Sicily and became a priest. He became a noted preacher and evangelist throughout Sicily and Italy and won many converts. He embraced intense devotion to the Passion of Jesus and his example of charity and humility brought many to join the Dominicans. He founded the priory of Our Lady of Grace in Monte Cerignone, Sicily, and served the rest of his life as its first superior. He died on December 21 1521 in Monte Cerignone, Sicily and his relics translated on October 3 1677. He was beatified by Pope Benedict XV in 1921.

### Saint Phêrô Truong Van Thi

St Phêrô Truong Van Thi, also known as Peter Thi, Peter Thi Van Truong Pham, or Pietro Truong Van Thi, was a priest in the apostolic vicariate of West Tonkin. He served in the missions alongside priests from the Foreign Mission Society of Paris. During the persecutions under Minh-Meng, he was imprisoned and repeatedly tortured. He ultimately died as a martyr, alongside Saint Andrew Dung Lac. Born around 1763 in Ke So, Hanoi, Vietnam, Saint Phêrô Truong Van Thi was beheaded on The 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1839, in Ô Cau Giay, Hanoi, Vietnam. He was canonized by Pope John Paul II on June 19, 1988, and is also remembered on November 24 as one of the Martyrs of Vietnam.

### Saint Anastasius II of Antioch

St. Anastasius II of Antioch was born in the 6th century. He was also known as Anastasius II the Younger. He was a bishop of Antioch, Syria in 599. He fought simony in his diocese with the support of Pope Gregory the Great. He was murdered by a mob during an uprising of Syrian Jews against Emperor Phocas who was trying to force conversions and because he died in anti-Church violence, he is considered a martyr. He died in 609 AD.

### Saint Glycerius of Nicomedia

St Glycerius of Nicomedia has a memorial on December 28 as one of the 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia. He was a priest at Nicomedia, Asia Minor (in modern Turkey). He was arrested and tortured in the persecutions of Diocletian. When he was offered a release if he would denounce his faith, he declined. He died as a martyr after being burned at the stake in 303 AD in Nicomedia, Bithynia (now in modern-day Izmit, Turkiye).

### Blessed Daniel of the Annunciation

Blessed Daniel of the Annunciation was also known as Daniele dell'Annunziata. He was a Mercedarian monk at the monastery of Santa Maria della Pace in Naples, Italy. A staunch defender of the freedom of the Church from state control and of his Order. He was known for personal piety and strict adherence to his Order's rule and orthodox Christian doctrine.

### Saint Baudacarius of Bobbio

St Baudacarius of Bobbio was also known as Baudacharius. He was a benedictine monk in Bobbio, Italy. He was in charge of the monastery's vineyard and 30 brothers were assigned to help him. Legend says that once he ran nearly out of food to feed them, but prayed for help and was able to feed them all from a single cooked duck. He died in 650 AD due to natural causes and his relics were interred in the abbey of Saint Colombano, Emilia Romagna, Bobbio, Italy in 1483 AD.

### Blessed Sibrand of Marigård

Blessed Sibrand of Marigård was born in the late 12th century AD in the Netherlands. He was also known as Sibrandus or Siebrandus. He was a Premonstratensian monk and a canon of the Mariengarde monastery in Friesland (in modern Netherlands). He was an abbot of the house in 1230 AD. He was known for his scholarship and personal piety. He established comprehensive education for his brothers and required the study of the Church fathers. He died on December 21 1238 due to natural causes.

### Saint James of Valencia

St James of Valencia was born in Valencia, Spain. He joined the Mercedarians at age 27 at El Puig, Spain. He was noted for an austere personal life and ministry to the poor. He was sent to Algiers to ransom some prisoners where he decided to preach Christianity in a synagogue. He died as a martyr after being stoned to death in 1362 AD in Algiers.

### Saint Themistocles of Lycia

St Themistocles of Lycia was a shepherd at Myra, Lycia. He was martyred because he would not tell the authorities where St. Dioscorus was hiding during the persecution of Valerian. He was beheaded and died in 253 AD. He is the representation of shepherds with iron caltrops nearby.

### Blessed Adrian of Dalmatia

Blessed Adrian of Dalmatia was also known as Hadrian. He was a thirteenth-century Dominican missionary. He was martyred by Muslims along with 27 companions whose names are not known. He died in Dalmatia.

### **Blessed Bezela of Göda**

Blessed Bezela of Göda was born in the late 10th century AD in Germany. She was the mother of St. Benno of Meissen. She died in the mid-11th century in Göda, Saxony, Germany of natural causes.

### **Saint John Vincent**

St John Vincent was born in Ravenna in Italy. He was a benedictine monk at St. Michael of Chiusa where he built a church. He was a hermit on Monte Caprario and a bishop. He died in 1012 AD due to natural causes.

### **Saint Beornwald of Bampton**

St Beornwald of Bampton was also known as Berenwald or Byrnwald. He was an eighth-century priest who was venerated at Bampton, England.

### **Saint Dioscorus**

St Dioscorus was a companion of St Themistocles of Lycia. He was martyred in the persecution of Valerian. He was beheaded and died in 253 AD.

### **Saint Severinus of Trier**

St Severinus of Trier was a bishop of Trier in modern Germany. He died in 300 AD.

### **Saint John of Tuscany**

St John of Tuscany was martyred with St. Festus. He was honoured in Tuscany, Italy.

### **Saint Festus of Tuscany**

St. Festus of Tuscany was a martyr honoured in Tuscany, Italy.

Other Saints of the Day for The 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025

- Peter Friedhof
- Domenico Spadafora of Randazzo
- Peter of Moscow
- Catholic Saint Feast Days in November

Today's 21<sup>st</sup> Of December 2025 Catholic Sunday Readings Homily Theme: Joseph, Do Not Be Afraid To Take Mary Your Wife - Matthew 1:18-25

### **Mass Times For the weekend**

<b>Saturday Night Mass Times</b>	
Saint Josephs	5:30pm
<b>Sunday Mass Times</b>	
Saint Joseph's	9:30am
Saint Anne's & Holy Family	11:00 am
Saint Patrick's Ryhope	9:30 am

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