

Saint Pius X
21 August



About Pope Saint Pius X (1825-1914)

Born Giuseppe Sarto in the village of Riese, near Venice in 1835, he was one of ten children in a poor family. He was ordained a priest at the age of 23 and later became the Bishop of Mantua and of Venice. He was elected pope against his wishes in 1903. His motto as pope was "restore all things in Christ".

Pope Saint Pius X insisted on the separation of Church and State and banned the formation of political associations that claimed exclusive religious support for their political program, whether they were from the left wing or the right wing.

In his time as pope he revised the Code of Canon Law and took stern measures against 'modernist' trends in theology. He also founded an institute for scriptural studies and initiated the revision of the Latin translation of the Bible (the Vulgate) as well as reforms of the liturgy. His liturgical reforms include: his promotion of liturgical participation, especially of frequent communion, to which he admitted young children (at the age of seven), encouraging priests to give simple homilies, reintroducing Gregorian Chant into the liturgy, revising the Roman Breviary and developing a new Catechism.

He tried to avert the outbreak of World War I, but this was not to be and so he died on 20 August 1914, just sixteen days after the War began, of a broken heart.

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How does the life of Saint Pius X apply to our lives today?

Pope Saint Pius X had Christ at the heart of everything he did. He did not use the papacy for power, prestige or riches. No, the poverty he was born into was the poverty that he lived throughout his papacy. He preached sermons every Sunday in the courtyards of the Vatican to anyone who would listen. He was known for his simplicity and goodness of heart. He promoted good liturgy and that should be our goal in this day and age. His request of priests to preach simple homilies is probably one that should pervade their preaching in this day and age when so many people are unaware of the basics of our Catholic faith. However, that simplicity should not be limited to the clergy. It applies to all teachers and to all who are involved in the liturgy. That is not to say we water down our explanations to the point that they lose their meaning, but instead that we ourselves are able to understand and explain to others the message of Christ, so that they too will understand and in turn be able to proclaim the Good News to others.

Pope Saint Pius X also reduced the age for receiving First Holy Communion and realized that reception of Holy Communion is an integral part of our participation in the Mass. As we return to **our worshipping communities let us have a greater appreciation of the Jesus' presence in the Eucharist** and allow our participation and reception of the Eucharist to transform our lives so that we can be a power house for Jesus here on earth.

Quote:

"Holy Communion is the shortest and safest way to Heaven."

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Collect

O God, who to safeguard the Catholic faith
and to restore all things in Christ,
filled Pope Saint Pius the Tenth
with heavenly wisdom and apostolic fortitude,
graciously grant that, following his teaching and example,
we may gain an eternal prize.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

John 21:15-17

Feed my lambs, feed my sheep

Jesus showed himself to his disciples,
and after they had eaten he said to Simon Peter,
'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do?'
He answered, 'Yes Lord, you know I love you.'
Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.'
A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'
He replied, 'Yes, Lord, you know I love you.'
Jesus said to him, 'Look after my sheep.'
Then he said to him a third time,
'Simon son of John, do you love me?'
Peter was upset that he asked him the third time,
'Do you love me?' and said,
'Lord, you know everything; you know I love you.'
Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'

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Antiphon

The Good Shepherd has laid down his life for his sheep.

Hymn for the Memorial of Saint Pius X

From a poor family
God chose this humble man
to shepherd His flock here on earth
and to make known Christ's plan.

"Restore all things in Christ,"
was what this man once said,
Saint Pius who preached simple words
so Christ's Name would be spread.

As the True Bread of Life,
Christ in this Feast is here,
we must receive Him frequently
was Pius' message clear.

A humble gentle man,
Saint Pius, you sought peace,
so the world would avoid a war,
and enmities would cease.

In everything we do,
may Jesus be the flame,
so to Him a witness we'll be
with joy and without shame!

Tune: SM 66.86

CWB #248

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono

Music Links to the Scripture Readings

[Because the Lord is My Shepherd](#)

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