

Saint Charles Borromeo
(Bishop)
4 November



About Saint Charles Borromeo

Saint Charles Borromeo was born in a castle on the shores of Lago Maggiore in northern Italy in 1538 to an enormously powerful family. He was related to the well-known Medici family on his **mother's side**. He received a doctorate in civil and canon law at the University of Pavia. When his uncle (Pius IV) was elected Pope in 1559, Charles was summoned to Rome and made a cardinal.

Charles was a great champion of the Church redefining itself in light of the Protestant Reformation. As Archbishop of Milan, he promulgated the reforms of the Council of Trent, including liturgical and clerical renewal. As part of these reforms he established new seminaries for the education of the clergy, defining a code of moral conduct for clergy, and founding the Oblates of Saint Ambrose, which was a society of diocesan priests that enforced the reforms of Trent.

Saint Charles adopted a simple lifestyle whereby he responded to the needs of the poor and sick by providing monetary and spiritual support.

What can we learn from Saint Charles' life?

Saint Charles used the resources at his disposal to promote a good example and to serve others. His program of reform included giving much of his property to the poor, setting up the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine to teach children the faith (the beginning of the Sunday School). When famine struck in his province of Milan, he fed 3,000 people at his own expense and inspired others to do the same. When the plague came, he prepared himself for the worst, made his will and went to the hospital where the worst cases were.

Saint Charles was a leader and expected others to follow. He did not wait for someone else to come up with the ideas. On the contrary, he had a clear direction of where he thought things should be going and he was not going to budge. He was indeed a very hard worker and met a lot of opposition in his program of reform, including some assassination attempts. Those attempts did not stop him from helping people or challenging others to do the right thing. Even in a plague he was helping people. That sounds like the current situation we are in with COVID-19. In the midst of the various situations that present themselves in our lives, we, like Saint Charles, need to lead by example and always be ready to use what we have for the benefit of God and his people.

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Collect

Preserve in the midst of your people,
we ask, O Lord, the spirit with which you filled
the Bishop Saint Charles Borromeo,
that your Church may be constantly renewed
and, by conforming herself to the likeness of Christ,
may show his face to the world.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

John 10:11-16

The good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep

Jesus said:

'I am the good shepherd:

the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep.

The hired man, since he is not the shepherd

and the sheep do not belong to him,

abandons the sheep and runs away

as soon as he sees a wolf coming,

and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep;

this is because he is only a hired man

and has no concern for the sheep.

'I am the good shepherd;

I know my own and my own know me,

just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;

and I lay down my life for my sheep.

And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold,

and these I have to lead as well.

They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock,

and one shepherd.'

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Antiphon

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

Hymn for the Memorial of Saint Charles Borromeo

1. Saint Charles Borromeo,
a man skilled in the law,
both in the Church and out
corrected wrongs he saw.

*With all he had,
and with great love
he helped the poor
and those in need.*

2. Saint Charles Borromeo,
a servant and a priest,
reformed the Cath'lic Church,
made holiness increase.

*With all he had,
and with great love
he helped the poor
and those in need.*

3. Saint Charles Borromeo,
who by example led,
attending to the sick
and giving daily bread.

*With all he had,
and with great love
he helped the poor
and those in need.*

4. Like you may we always,
teach those who do not know
the teachings of the Church
that in faith they may grow.

*With all we have,
let us commit
to help the poor
and those in need.*

Text: Chris DeSilva and Alessio Loiacono

TUNE: Darwall's 148TH 66.66.44.44

Other Music Suggestion

[Because the Lord is My Shepherd](#) (Christopher Walker)

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