

### **Feast, St's Michael, Gabriel & Raphael, Archangels: Mon. 29<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2025:**

*Gabriel* appears to Zachariah, to tell him that Elizabeth will give birth to a son, and that his name will be John and that many will rejoice at his birth. Gabriel visits Mary and Joseph, announcing the Saviour's birth. *Michael* is chief among the angels responsible for guarding and caring for Israel and for the Church (the New Israel); he is the defender of the faith, a warrior against evil and our battle with Satan. *Raphael* heals the disturbed communion between Tobit and Sarah, healing their love, driving away the demons preventing them from giving themselves to one another in selfless love.

### **The Memorial of Saint Jerome, priest and doctor – Tues. 30<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2025:**

St Jerome is best known for his painstaking translation of the bible into the Latin, which at the time was the '*vulgar language*' of the people, giving it the nickname '*The Vulgate*'. He says, '*Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ*'. So, whichever language we use, the scriptures should form part of our daily prayer, which is nothing short of a conversation with Jesus. Only then will we be equipped to know what Christ might say and ask us to do in any situation. Be careful; make sure you are using a Catholic bible, not one that has been edited, having books removed that did not agree with the reformers' positions. We must also consider the translation, as translating from Hebrew and Greek is decidedly tricky, and dynamic translations might be easier to read, but can lose some of the accuracy of the message. In the Mass, we currently use the '*English Standard Version Catholic Edition*', and, I guess, this will take time to embed, as we have the Jerusalem Bible translation seared onto our hearts and minds.

### **The Memorial of St Therese of the Child Jesus – Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025:**

Therese entered the Carmelite Order at 15. She was devoted to Christ's Mother, reporting a vision of Our Lady smiling on her – one doubted by the religious authorities, knocking her confidence. Christmas 1886 was a turning point, coming to understand that if God made himself a little child, she too could grow up in an instant. Entering the Carmel, she's given the name, Therese of the Child Jesus. Telling her father about entering the Carmel caused him tears, but he gave her a little flower as a sign of God's tender care for his creation; Therese seeing it as a symbol of our destiny to live in another soil – the Carmel? Heaven? She died aged 25 from Tuberculosis and yet, her writing means she is revered as a '*Doctor of the Church*'. She encourages us to the '*little way*', that every small sacrifice and service, done with love, leads to sainthood.

### **The Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025:**

Each soul is assigned a Guardian Angel to protect our souls (*and our bodies if that is in accord with God's will*). They watch over us and protect us, by acting on our senses, intellect and imagination, but not on our free will, showing us the path to heaven.

***“Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day, be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide”.***

### **Optional Memorial – the Blessed Martyrs of Sussex – Fri. 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025:**

Today, we remember some of the Martyrs of Sussex who gave their lives for their Catholic Faith. They include Fathers Edmund James and Ralph Crockett who refused to recant their Catholic Faith, and after hearing each other's confession were executed in Chichester. Also, Fr Thomas Pilcher from Battle who was brutally and clumsily executed; the crime of being a Catholic priest who, in conscience, could not accept the King or Queen as supreme head of the Church in England. Others included Henry Weblay and Edward Shelley whose crime was the sheltering of Catholic priests, who had travelled to Seminaries and Monasteries in France or Rome to be trained for the English Mission, knowing that in all likelihood they would be arrested and executed.

### **The Memorial of St Francis of Assisi – Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2025:**

Today, we speak of a dichotomy of *‘maintenance and mission’*. When Francis was told by God, *‘go rebuild my Church; it is falling down’*, he did exactly that. St Francis went therefore and re-built the Church in Assisi, which was literally crumbling, but as he discovered this isn't what Jesus meant, he had to shift his thinking from *‘Maintenance to Mission’*. Indeed, we, rightly, invest a lot of time, money, and energy in our buildings, for they are useful for worship and give a place for the *‘Ecclesia’* to gather. The Apostles were charged to go out to the whole world and gather the nations back into the peace of God's kingdom – this is what we call Mission, the announcement of the good news of salvation – that Jesus has poured out his precious blood for the forgiveness of our sins. Attributed to St Francis (although we have no actual record of him saying it), *‘Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words’*. Francis says, *“start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, now suddenly you are doing the impossible”*. And he suggests we start by looking at ourselves: *‘sanctify yourself and you will sanctify society’*. Francis give us an example of how to be like Christ – to help the poorest of society carry their cross, and for which he was ridiculed.