

June 1

**BLESSED JOHN BAPTIST SCALABRINI,
BISHOP AND FOUNDER**

Feast

John Baptist Scalabrini was born on July 8, 1839 in Fino Mornasco, in the diocese of Como, Italy and was ordained a priest on May 30, 1863. He was named Bishop of Piacenza by Pius IX and was ordained to the episcopate on January 30, 1876. He remained in Piacenza until his saintly death on June 1, 1905, the Solemnity of the Ascension. He was especially devoted to the Eucharist, to the Cross of Jesus Christ and to the Virgin Mary. He assisted the victims of cholera and visited the sick and the imprisoned. He helped thousands of workers and farmers avoid death from starvation and he founded an Institute for the deaf and mute. On November 28, 1887, he founded the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo (Scalabrinians) for the religious, moral, social and legal assistance of the migrants. For the same purpose, with the help of Fr. Giuseppe Marchetti and his sister Assunta, he founded the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo (Scalabrinians) on October 25, 1895.

From the Common of Pastors: for a Bishop, except what follows:

Office of Readings

SECOND READING

From the “Pastoral Letters” of Blessed John Baptist, Bishop and Founder

(Lent 1878, Tip. G. Tedeschi, Piacenza 1878)

Jesus Christ. The invisible Head of the Church

Love Jesus, stay united to Jesus, since herein lies all the perfection of a Christian. Union with Jesus Christ: herein lies the beginning of all good, the foundation and the origin of all our greatness. *“I am the true vine, and you are the branches”* (cfr Jn 15:5). Now since the branch, detached from the vine, withers and dies, in the same way you will also die if you are detached from Jesus Christ. Union with Jesus Christ is vital for us; without it, we are dead and everything that is ours is dead and we become like corpses, bodies without a soul.

So, if you wish your work to be meritorious, unite it to Jesus’ merits; if you want your prayer requests to be granted, unite them to Jesus’ prayer, if you want your sorrow, discomfort or pain to be beneficial to you, unite them to Jesus’ sorrows, discomforts and pains. He is a loving brother, whom we must hold on to, lean upon and walk with on the journey of life.

For from him we receive every grace, the value of every action and the strength to accomplish it. In a word, he is life itself, the spirit of our soul, a spirit that is so life-giving that without it nothing can be accomplished to merit heaven and every effort becomes useless: *“without me you can do nothing.”* (Jn 15:5).

Not only must we live on Jesus Christ, but it is even more important that he himself be our life and live in us. He must live in us with his spirit, with his grace, his mysteries, the

application of his merits, the efficacy of the Sacraments and, above all, with the Sacrament of his Body and Blood, so that we too can cry out with St. Paul: “*it is no longer I who live, but Jesus Christ lives in me*” (Gal 2:20).

All this means, as St. Francis de Sales explains, that Jesus lives in our heart as our master and king, that his Spirit spreads and expands in us, and that with his life-giving warmth he enfolds us, energizes everything, sanctifies everything and divinizes everything. He loves with our heart, thinks with our mind, speaks with our mouth and works with our hands. Our energies are to be spent for him, all studies undertaken for his glory, our duties done with his grace and our sufferings borne for love of him. Even the moments of entertainment and the meals are to be taken to please him, since his throne is set up in the very heart of a Christian: “*the kingdom of God is in your midst*” (Lk 17:21).

All our human endeavors, albeit miraculous, and even our virtues, practiced in a mere human way, even if these were the most heroic of virtues, will not help us attain eternal life, unless they are done with Jesus, for him and in him. They would all be like wingless doves unable to take to the sky. But if they are united to Jesus they rise to the supernatural order and then, St. Paul's promise will come true, that “*this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison*” (2 Cor: 4, 17). A coin must have the image of its Sovereign or else it will not be recognized as valid for trade; just so the works of the Christian must have the imprint of Jesus Christ, or else they will have no value in securing heaven, and the Father will not accept anything that does not have the imprint of his Son or does not show forth something of his character. We ourselves will not have access to glory, unless we are found in conformity with this divine Model (Rom 8:29).

RESPONSORY Cfr. Gal 2: 20

R/. It is not I who live, but Christ lives in me. * He has loved me and has given himself up for me.

V/. This life, which I live in the flesh, I live it by faith in the Son of God.

R/. He has loved me and has given himself up for me.

Or

From the “Pastoral Letters” of Blessed John Baptist, Bishop and Founder

(Lent 1892, Tip. G. Tedeschi, Piacenza 1892)

The priest acts on behalf of men and of God

The harvest is abundant, the laborers are few. Would that the Lord would send many other laborers into his harvest!

Of all the tasks man is called to do on earth, none can be compared to the Catholic Priesthood. As St. John Chrysostom writes, earthly royalty itself is bound to bow before the priestly majesty. Bodies are subject to the kings, while souls are subject to the priests.

A king is enthroned in human society, but even there, where his power is absolute, it is exercised

only at a subordinate level and is limited to temporal matters. The priest, instead, rises higher: with his ministry, he reaches to the divine order itself and peers into eternity. Of the king, one can say: “he is taken from among men and appointed for men in all that regards them”; “*the priest – however – is taken from among men and is appointed for men in everything that regards God.*” (Heb 5:1).

In truth, the priest is God’s coadjutor, his ambassador, his lieutenant, the interpreter of his will, the advocate of his mercy, the custodian of his sacred mysteries, the dispenser of his graces. United to the priest’s humanity, the faithful are brought closer to God; religious people join their prayers and entreaties to his so that all may rise up to heaven together. On the priest, more so than on any other earthly authority, and in a more outstanding, and in a nobler and livelier way, is the image of God imprinted; upon him are poured the heavenly gifts that he, in turn, must pour out upon the world.

A two-way stream of sacred goods stretches from earth to heaven and from heaven to earth: from earth to heaven flow humanity’s works of religion, and from heaven to earth flow God’s blessings. It is in the priest that these holy things meet, just as – on the mountains – the mists rising up from the valley to the clouds meet with the waters that from the clouds flow down to the valley below.

The priest! He speaks and acts in humanity’s name, he speaks and acts in God’s name. He is the man of the Church, the man of God: in this dual office he represents Jesus Christ, the Universal and Eternal Priest, the source of all priesthood.

RESPONSORY

1 Pt 2: 4-5; Ps 118; 21

R/. Come to the Lord, a living stone, and like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house:* He is the stone upon which the house is built.

V/. Having become a holy priesthood, offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ:

R/. He is the stone upon which the house is built.

HYMN Te Deum.

Concluding Prayer as in Morning Prayer.

Morning prayer

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

Antiphon: I made myself all things to all people to save at least some of them.

INVOCATIONS

Christ is the Good Shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep. Let us praise and thank him as we pray:

Illumine and guide your people, O Lord

Christ, who in blessed John Baptist have shown us a living image of your merciful love,
- *may we come to experience the sweetness of your charity in those who guide us.*

Through your holy shepherds, leaders of your people, you served as physician of our bodies and our spirits,
- *may your presence always reach us through them.*

You want us to see you in all those seeking help,
- *grant that we may serve you in the poor and the suffering, in the migrants and in the refugees.*

You invite us to seek constantly your kingdom,
- *grant that we commit ourselves to building a more just and more human world.*

Our Father

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O God, who in blessed Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini have given the migrants a vigilant and caring shepherd, grant, through his intercession, that, in proclaiming your gospel of salvation, we may work toward the unity of the human family.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen

MIDDAY PRAYER

Hymn, Antiphons and Psalms of the day.

Evening prayer

CANTICLE OF MARY

Antiphon:

I give you thanks, O Christ, good Shepherd,
that you have brought me to glory:
may the flock you have entrusted to me
be with me in your kingdom.

INTERCESSIONS

Jesus Christ is worthy of all praise, for he was appointed High Priest among men and women and their representative before God. We honor him and in our frailty, we pray:

Bring salvation to your people, Lord.

You raised in your Church the blessed Bishop John Baptist,

- may your Christian people be always guided by wise and generous leaders.

You forgave the sins of your people when their holy shepherds, like Moses, sought your compassion,

- through their merits and intercession, continue to purify and sanctify your Church.

Grant safety to those who travel by air, by land or by sea,

- may they happily reach their desired haven.

Help the oppressed, console the sorrowful, free the prisoners, give food to the hungry, strengthen the weak and assist the migrants,

- may the victory of the cross shine on all.

Through the shepherds of your Church you assist your faithful and you keep them from being snatched out of your hand,

- may the bishops, the priests and all the faithful departed be united in the joy of your kingdom.

Our Father

Concluding Prayer as in Morning Prayer.