

Vox Populi - The Voice of the People

29 June 2022

We are now officially in the second half of 2022. That means six months to Christmas!

However there is a great deal in the calendar to celebrate before then.

Each month of the year is dedicated to a particular devotion within the Catholic faith; the dedication of each month is based on historical events or a particular aspect of the liturgical calendar, or a combination of the two.

July is the month we honour the Precious Blood of Jesus - falling right between June's devotion to the Sacred Heart and August's devotion to the Immaculate Heart.

The feast of the Precious Blood of our Lord was instituted in 1849 by Pius IX, but the devotion is as old as Christianity. The early Fathers say that the Church was born from the pierced side of Christ, and that the sacraments were brought forth through His Blood.

The month also falls within the liturgical season of **Ordinary Time**, which is represented by the liturgical colour green. This symbol of hope is the colour of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection.

Ordinary Time, which means ordered or numbered time, is celebrated in two segments: from the Monday following the Baptism of Our Lord up to Ash Wednesday; and from Pentecost Monday to the First Sunday of Advent. This makes it the largest season of the Liturgical Year.

The rhythm of the liturgical seasons reflects the rhythm of life — with its celebrations of anniversaries and its seasons of quiet growth and maturing.

In July we celebrate many important feast days and memorials. Sunday is the feast of St Thomas the Apostle, who at first did not believe but has become known for the fervour in which he expressed his regained faith: "My Lord and my God".

Also in July there are memorials for St Maria Goretti; Saints Bonaventure and Peter Chrysologus, both Bishops and Doctors of the Church; Our Lady of Mount Carmel; Sts Joachim and Anne; Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus and St Ignatius of Loyola.

On 22 July we celebrate the Feast of St Mary Magdalene. This liturgical celebration honouring St Mary Magdalene was raised from a memorial to a feast in June 2016, recognising her in the same status as the other apostles of Jesus. A most ardent and loving follower of Jesus, she stood with Mary at the foot of the Cross, and when she went to the tomb with the other women, it was in the garden near the tomb that Jesus appeared to her. Mary Magdalene brought the news of the Resurrection to the Apostles, leading many to refer to her as the "apostle to the apostles".

We don't worship the Saints, but we can ask them to intercede on our behalf, and we know their prayers are powerful.

