

December 2011

A.D.:Anno Domini

A Church history supplement for adult Catholics

This Month's Focus: A.D. 1600-1700



Diocesan Mission Statement

“We, the Catholic community of the Diocese of Scranton, are called through Baptism to imitate the servant leadership of Jesus Christ. In union with our Holy Father, the Pope, we proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments joyfully, and boldly promote life, justice, and peace in north-eastern and northcentral Pennsylvania.

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Key Events: A.D. 1600-1700

1601: St. John Eudes is born. He is most famous for initiating (with St. Margaret Mary Alacoque) devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Holy Heart of Mary.

1602: St. Francis de Sales is named Bishop of Geneva, a land that had become largely Protestant under the influence of John Calvin. Through preaching and distributing leaflets explaining what Catholics really believed he was profoundly successful in bringing many ex-Catholics back into the Church.

1607: Jamestown, Virginia founded.

1611: The Protestant King James

Bible published.

1620: The pilgrims set sail on the Mayflower.

1621: St. Robert Bellarmine dies. A doctor of the Church, Bellarmine was very influential in the lives of two other great saints—Aloysius Gonzaga and Francis de Sales. He wrote extensively on topics of theology and spirituality.

1636: St. Isaac Jogues, a French Jesuit, lands in Canada and preaches the Gospel among local Native American tribes. He was captured, tortured, and mutilated before being rescued and sent back to France. In 1644 he returned and was martyred.

1656: Blessed Kateri Tekawitha, an Iroquois, was born in the same village where St. Isaac Jogues was martyred. She became a Christian in the midst of much opposition and is the only beatified Native American to date.

1660: St. Vincent de Paul dies. He had dedicated his life to the service of the poor and founded the Vincentians and the Daughters of Charity.

1687: Isaac Newton publishes *Principia Mathematica*.

1692: The Salem witch trials begin in Massachusetts.

Key Concept: The Galileo Affair

The 17th century is when the famous “Galileo Affair” took place. Galileo was condemned by the Church because he taught that the earth revolved around the sun, while the Bible says the sun revolves around the earth, right? Wrong. The scientific theory that the average person so often attributes to Galileo actually originated with Copernicus in his famous book *De Revolutionibus*, which he

dedicated to his friend Pope Paul III. Did the Pope condemn Copernicus? No. So what was the source of conflict between the Church and Galileo? The situation is fairly complex but it boils down to Galileo moving beyond simply trying to prove the heliocentric theory to him eventually proposing that science is more important than faith. In other words, he saw faith and reason as

being in conflict, when Christianity has always seen them as complimentary since they are both directed towards the same thing—Truth. This is why so many of the scientific theories we take for granted today come directly from the work of priest/monk scientists. Galileo’s application of scientific criteria towards *metaphysical* questions (e.g. “What is the meaning of life?”) led to conflict.



St. Isaac gave the name "Lake of the Blessed Sacrament" to what is now Lake George.

"My God, it grieves me greatly that you are not known..."



You can visit the martyrdom site of St. Isaac at the National Shrine of the North American martyrs in upstate New York.

Get to Know: St. Isaac Jogues (A.D. 1607-1646)

St. Isaac Jogues was born in Orleans, France on January 10, 1607. In 1624 he entered the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) and became a missionary. Traveling to the New World, he was the first priest to arrive on the island of Manhattan (modern day New York City). The thrust of his missionary activity was to preach the Gospel among the Native Americans in Canada, particularly the Huron and Algonquin tribes, though he hoped to preach to the Sioux, who lived on the other side of the Great Lakes at the head of the Mississippi River (St. Isaac and his traveling companions were the first Europeans to reach Lake Superior).

His plans were altered, however, when, in 1642, after having delivered much needed supplies to the Huron mission in Quebec, he and his companions were captured by a band of Iroquois warriors (the traditional enemies of the Huron). During his imprisonment Isaac's finger nails were pulled out, several of his fingers were gnawed off, and his hair and beard were plucked out. Nevertheless, he sought to the best of his ability to preach the Gospel to his captors over the course of 13 months of imprisonment. In 1643 Dutch merchants rescued him and sent him back to France. While recovering from his injuries, Pope Ur-

ban VII called St. Isaac "a living martyr for Christ" and gave him special permission to celebrate Mass with his mutilated hands (the Eucharist was only supposed to be touched with the index finger and thumb).

In 1644, of his own free will, St. Isaac returned to Canada and in 1646 he helped negotiate a peace treaty with the Iroquois, Hurons, Algonquins, and French. He remained among his former captors as a missionary. When, later, an epidemic broke out in the area the Iroquois blamed St. Isaac, whom they captured and beheaded. His feast day is October 10.

In Their Own Words: From the diary by St. John de Brebeuf, companion of St. Isaac

"For two days now I have experienced a great desire to martyr and to endure all the torments the martyrs suffered.

Jesus, my Lord and Savior, what can I give you in return for all the favors you have first conferred on me? I will take from your hand the cup of your sufferings and call on your Name. I vow before your eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, before your most holy Mother and her chaste spouse, before the angels, apostles and martyrs, before my blessed fathers Saint Ignatius and Saint Xavier-in truth I vow to you, Jesus my Savior, that as far as I have the strength I will never fail to accept the grace of martyrdom, if some day you in your infinite mercy you should offer it

to me, your most unworthy servant.

I bind myself in this way so that for the rest of my life I will have neither permission nor freedom to refuse opportunities of dying and shedding my blood for you, unless at a particular juncture I should consider it more suitable for your glory to act otherwise at that time. Further, I bind myself to this so that, on receiving the blow of death, I shall accept it from your hands with the fullest and joy of spirit. For this reason, my beloved Jesus and because of the surging joy which moves me, now I offer my blood and body and life. May I die only for you, if you will grant me this grace, since you willingly died for me. Let me so live that you may grant

me the gift of such a happy death. In this way my God and Savior, I will take from your hand the cup of sufferings and call on your Name: Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

My God, it grieves me greatly that you are not known, that in this savage wilderness all have not been converted to you, that sin has not been driven from it. My God, even if all the brutal tortures which prisoners in this region must endure should fall on me; I offer myself most willingly to them and I alone shall suffer them all."