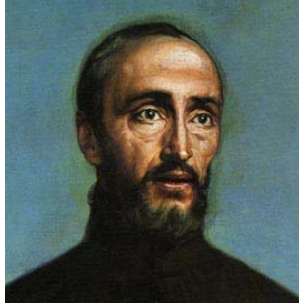


## DECEMBER 2009 FEAST DAYS

### Thursday, December 3 — Saint Francis Xavier



Born in Spain in 1506, Francis met Ignatius of Loyola at the University of Paris, and was one of the first members of the Society of Jesus. He spent many years working as a missionary with the peoples of Goa, Southeast Asia and Japan. He had excellent organizational skills. The communities he established continued to flourish long after his departure. He was canonized in 1602 and is a patron of foreign missions.

### Tuesday, December 8 — Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary



In celebrating this feast, we single out this woman among all women for her pivotal role in our story. It is the patronal feast of the Sodality as well as the foundation day of the Bordeaux Sodality and the Marianist Family. Members of the Society of Mary are asked to remember their fellow brothers and those associated with the Society at the Eucharist. The deceased members are remembered during a Eucharist in the following week.

### Wednesday, December 9 — Saint Juan Diego



This simple and humble native Mexican communicated with the Blessed Virgin at Tepeyac Hill. He was canonized in 2002 by Pope John Paul II.

### Saturday, December 12 — Our Lady of Guadalupe



This feast commemorates the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin in 1531 at Tepeyac, on the outskirts of Mexico City. In one of her appearances to the aboriginal convert, Juan Diego, she left an imprint of her image on a cloak. This cloak is an object of great veneration and is preserved in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, one of the major pilgrimage centers of North America. Devotion to Our Lady under this title has grown over the centuries and in 1946 Pope Pius XII named her a patron of the Americas.

## Monday, December 14 — Saint John of the Cross



Born in Spain in 1542, John of the Cross was a poet and a mystic. He collaborated with Teresa of Avila in founding the reformed (“Discalced”) Carmelite friars. He suffered cruel imprisonment and privations by the unreformed Carmelites. Known as the “Mystical Doctor,” he authored a number of books. Among them are *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Dark Night of the Soul*. He died in 1591.

## Saturday, December 26 — Saint Stephen



Stephen is the first-named among the seven deacons chosen to minister to Greek-speaking Christians in Jerusalem at the dawn of the Christian church. He is the first recorded martyr of the New Testament. Let us offer our special prayers for our Provincial, Stephen Glodek, on his name day.

## Monday, December 28 — The Holy Innocents



This feast commemorates the killing of the children of Bethlehem following the birth of Jesus. The event is noted in Matthew’s gospel 2:16-18. The Church venerates these children as martyrs, the first to be killed by persecution. The feast dates back to the fifth century.

## Tuesday, December 29 — Saint Thomas Becket



Ordained as a deacon in 1154, Thomas was chosen Lord Chancellor by King Henry II. Later the king appointed him Archbishop of Canterbury. Their disagreements on church matters forced Thomas into exile. Within weeks of his return, they clashed again. Thomas was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral. Pope Alexander III declared him a saint in 1173, only three years after his death.