

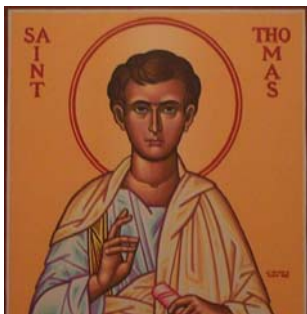
JULY 2009 FEAST DAYS

Wednesday, July 1 — Blessed Junipero Serra



A native of Majorca, Spain, Serra became a Franciscan missionary. He arrived in New Spain in 1750 and established nine of the California missions. He baptized more than 6,000 native peoples and was described by Pope John Paul II as “an exemplary model of the selfless evangelizer.” Historians recognize him as a builder of the state of California.

Friday, July 3 — St. Thomas, Apostle



Although the phrase “doubting Thomas” refers to St. Thomas, it overlooks both his loyalty in troubled times and his absolute surrender when given the evidence he sought. According to legend, Thomas engaged in a great missionary venture that took him as far as the south of India. There he was reportedly martyred. He is the patron saint of builders, and of India and Pakistan.

Saturday, July 4 — Independence Day



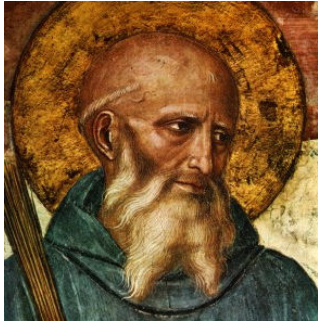
While July 4 is not a liturgical feast, there are special prayers and prefaces for this day (cf. *Sacramentary*, Appendix X.6 and Prefaces #82 and 83).

Thursday, July 9 — St. Augustine Zhao Rong & Companions



Augustine Zhao Rong was a Chinese priest who was martyred with his 119 companions in 1815. Among their number was an 18-year-old boy, Chi Zhuzi, who cried out to those who had just cut off his right arm and who were preparing to flay him alive: “Every piece of my flesh and drop of my blood will tell you that I am a Christian.” They were canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2000.

Saturday, July 11 — St. Benedict



Few saints have left such a palpable impact on the world as St. Benedict, the monk whose *Rule* set a standard for the Western monastic tradition. His balance of work and prayer, his validation of community life, and his regulation of monastic discipline set the pattern for religious life for centuries. He died in Italy in the sixth century. Benedict was proclaimed Patron of Europe in 1964 by Pope Paul VI. Marianists celebrate him as their Patriarch (cf. R.L. 4.10).

Tuesday, July 14 — Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha



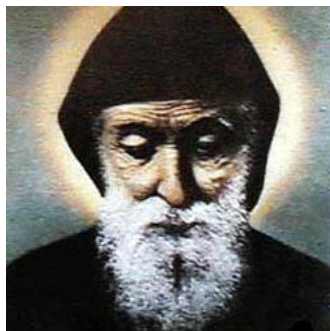
This native American woman led a life of great austerity and love in spite of ridicule and abuse. She was called “Lily of the Mohawks.” She died in Québec in 1680 at the age of 24. In 1980 she was the first native American to be declared “Blessed.”

Thursday, July 16 — Our Lady of Mount Carmel



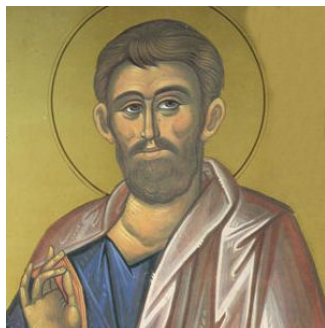
The Carmelites have celebrated their patronal feast on this day since the 14th century. The Order of Carmel dates to the 12th century, when a group of Western hermits settled on Mount Carmel, overlooking the plain of Galilee, in imitation of the prophet Elijah. They grouped themselves around a small chapel dedicated to Our Lady. The Order of Carmel, as we know it, was formed in the 13th century.

Friday, July 24 — St. Sharbel Makhlef



Born in 1828 in a small mountain village in north Lebanon, Sharbel became a monk of the Maronite Rite and was ordained a priest in 1859. Devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, he spent the last 23 years of his life as a hermit. Despite temptations to wealth and comfort, he taught the value of poverty, self-sacrifice, and prayer by the life he lived. His tomb at the monastery of St. Maron in Lebanon is a place of pilgrimage. In 1977 he was canonized by Pope Paul VI and is known as the “Hermit of Lebanon.”

Saturday, July 25 — St. James, Apostle



The apostle James, son of Zebedee and brother of John the Evangelist, was a fisherman. He was beheaded by order of Herod Agrippa, making him the first of the apostles to be martyred. He is known as James “the Greater” to distinguish him from the other apostle of the same name. He is a patron saint of Spain and of pilgrims. In northwestern Spain he is venerated at Santiago de Compostela, a famous medieval pilgrimage destination.

Sunday, July 26 — 17th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Sts. Joachim and Anne



The feast is superseded by the Sunday celebration. However, it may be transferred to Monday, July 27.

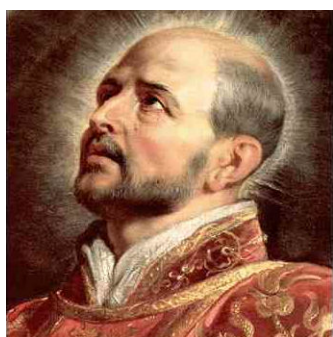
The gospels tell us nothing about Mary’s parents — Jesus’ grandparents — including their names. All we know comes from writings excluded from the canon of Scripture, in particular the Protogospel of James. The cult of St. Anne existed in the 6th century in the Church of Constantinople and early in the 8th century in Rome. Joachim has been honored in the East from the earliest days, but in the West only since the 16th century.

Wednesday, July 29 — St. Martha



Martha was the sister of Mary and Lazarus, and all three were friends of Jesus. She is a model of hospitality as well as fidelity in discipleship. At the raising of Lazarus from the dead, it was Martha who went out to meet Jesus and confessed her belief that He was the Christ, the Son of God. Martha is the patroness of housewives and of waiters and waitresses.

Friday, July 31 — St. Ignatius of Loyola



Ignatius was born into a noble Basque family in northern Spain and raised as a gentleman destined for military service. During his convalescence from a battle wound, his reading of the life of Christ and the lives of the saints inflamed him with a desire to serve Jesus. During a nine-month stay in Manresa, praying and serving the poor, he had mystical experiences and illuminations which later formed the basis of his famous *Spiritual Exercises*. He founded the Society of Jesus that today numbers some 20,000 members. He died in 1556 and was canonized in 1622.