

## AUGUST 10: FEAST OF ST. LAWRENCE, PATRON OF THE POOR



“Saint Lawrence was born in Spain in the third century. In 257, Pope Sixtus ordained St. Lawrence as a deacon and appointed him first among the seven deacons who served in the church. He had care of the treasury and the distribution of alms among the poor.

After the death of Sixtus, the prefect of Rome demanded that St Lawrence turn over the riches of the Church. St Lawrence asked for three days to gather together the wealth. He worked quickly to distribute as much Church property to the poor as possible. On the third day he presented himself to the prefect, who ordered him to give up the treasures of the Church.

St. Lawrence presented the poor, the crippled, the blind and the suffering, and said these were the true treasures of the Church.

Like St. Lawrence, Pope Francis recognizes that the true wealth of the Church is its people, especially the poor and vulnerable. Hence his cry, “How I would like a Church which is poor and for the poor.”

In his encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis mentions the poor 61 times.

“A basic moral test for our society is how we treat the most vulnerable in our midst. In a society marred by deepening disparities between rich and poor, Scripture gives us the story of the Last Judgment (see Mt 25:31-46) and reminds us that we will be judged by our response to the ‘least among us.’” (USCCB, *Faithful Citizenship*, 50-51)

As we approach the campaign season, whose voice will we hear and listen to, Pope Francis or the candidate whose focus is the middle class?

### **Prayer for the Hungry (A Mealtime Prayer)**

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts:  
The gift of food, for us and for others;  
Of generosity, that when we have plenty  
None should go hungry the whole world over;  
The gift of hearts that grow in humility and compassion  
For each of your children who suffers misfortune;  
The gift of your love that extends our reach,  
And would not deny your gifts to another.  
Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

*Catholics Confront Global Poverty*



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