



# A newsletter from ST. MARY'S ABBEY

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## May 2016

1. VI Sunday of Easter (Fr. Edward Seton)

2. St. Athanasius, *memorial*

3. Ss. Philip and James, *feast*

5. Ascension of the Lord, *solemnity*

- ⊕ Mass with Students 10 a.m.
- ⊕ Solemn Vespers, 5:15 p.m.

8. VII Sunday of Easter (Fr. Hilary)

11. The Abbots of Cluny, *memorial*

13. 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday, 3-5 p.m.

14. St. Matthias, *feast*

15. Pentecost, *solemnity* (Abbot Richard)

- ⊕ Oblates of St. Benedict, Vincent House
- ⊕ Solemn Vespers, 5:15 p.m.

16. Lauds, 7:30 a.m. till the summer horarium.

- ⊕ Diaconate Ordination, 4 p.m.

19. Baccalaureate Mass, 6:30 p.m.

- ⊕ Vespers, 5 p.m.

22. Trinity Sunday, *solemnity* (Fr. Michael)

- ⊕ Commencement, 2 p.m.

25. St. Bede, *memorial*

29. Corpus Christi, *solemnity* (Fr. Hilary)

25. St. Bede, *memorial*

31. The Visitation of B.V.M., *feast*

This calendar follows the *Order of Worship* as approved by the Congregation for Divine Worship on 22 June 1972 in Rome for the American Cassinese Congregation of Benedictine Monasteries.

you to consider as a prayerful preparation for the Sunday Eucharist:

- ⊕ **May 1:** Acts 15:1-2, 22-29; Rev. 21: 10-14, 22-23; John 14:23-29.
- ⊕ **May 5:** Acts 1:1-11; Eph. 1:17-23 or Heb 9:24-28; Luke 24:46-53.
- ⊕ **May 8:** Acts 7:55-60; Rev. 22:12-14; John 17:20-26.
- ⊕ **May 15:** Acts 2:1-11; 1 Cor. 12:3b-7, 12-13; John 20:19-23.
- ⊕ **May 22:** Prov. 8:22-31; Rom. 5:1-5; John 16:12-15.
- ⊕ **May 22:** Gen. 14:18-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Luke 9:11b-17.

**OBLATES:** The Oblates will have their regular meeting in Vincent House immediately following the 11 a.m. Mass on 15 May 2016, as usual. For more information, please call Father Hilary at 973.538.3231 [ext. 2019].

**MAY SAINT:** Born Hildebrand ca. 1020, possibly in Tuscany, this month's saint was sent to Rome as a child to be educated in his uncle's monastery, Santa Maria all' Aventino. Hildebrand's uncle was the Abbot and his monastery was connected to the Cluniac monastic system. Once Hildebrand received minor orders he became a chaplain to Pope Gregory VI, accompanying the Pope into exile in Cologne in 1046. Three years later the new Pope, Leo IX, summoned Hildebrand to Rome where he was ordained subdeacon, appointed treasurer of the Roman church and prior of St. Paul's.

Hildebrand was now part of the church's inner circle and entrusted with more serious duties. In 1054 and 1056 Hildebrand was sent to France on missions, and to Germany in 1057. Under subsequent Popes, Nicholas II and Alexander II, Hildebrand was a close advisor at the papal court. Nicholas II created Hildebrand a cardinal in 1058. Pope Alexander II died on 21 April 1073. At the Pope's obsequies at the Lateran Basilica, there was an outcry from the clergy and people of Rome: "Let

**LECTIO DIVINA:** The following is the schema of readings for this month of May which we encourage

Hildebrand be Pope! Blessed Peter has chosen Hildebrand the Archdeacon!" Hildebrand fled the scene and was soon found at San Pietro in Vincoli, site of another monastery. The acclamation was soon ratified by the cardinals on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, and Hildebrand assumed the name Gregory, after Pope St. Gregory the Great, patron saint of Hildebrand's former mentor, Gregory VI.

A month following his election as Pope Gregory VII, he was ordained priest, and then consecrated a Bishop and enthroned as Pope the day following the feast of Ss. Peter and Paul, on the final day of June 1073. The Holy Roman Emperor, Henry IV had been excommunicated by Pope Alexander II. Thus Henry was not given the opportunity to chime in on the papal election. The new Pope and young emperor would continue to enjoy a rocky relationship.

Gregory VII soon proved to be a shrewd, intelligent and determined Pope. His reforms insisted on the personal sanctity of the Pope, his supremacy over and right to depose all princes. Gregory VII strengthened the Pope's legislative and judicial authority. Gregory would use this to continue the efforts to end simony (buying of church office) and require celibacy for all clergy (not traditionally required up to this point). Further stormy relations with Henry IV followed when the Pope pressed the lay investiture matter. Royal courts enjoyed the right of investing bishoprics and even exercise control over bishops, including deposing them. The Pope was soon faced with a synod called by the emperor, which disposed the Pope and urged him to abdicate.

Pope Gregory, who had the upper hand, excommunicated Henry—again—forcing Henry to beg for mercy (especially since his excommunicated created a serious political blow!). Gregory, however, miscalculated Henry's cunning. In an attempt to broker an agreement with Henry's political rival, the emperor was further distanced from the pope. Henry's incorrigibility caused the Pope to excommunicate him again. This time the emperor called an imperial council of bishops to depose the Pope and elect a rival, while the Pope appointed a rival emperor! Gregory's support from the Cardinals was waning, especially when Henry seized Rome in March 1084. Gregory, sought refuge

in Castle Sant' Angelo and was soon rescued. Unfortunately the popularity Gregory once enjoyed from the people of Rome was gone, and the Pope fled the city—first to Monte Cassino and finally to Salerno. There in exile, on 25 May 1084, Gregory VII died loving justice and hating iniquity.

Gregory VII's interactions with other political leaders of Europe was more moderate and at times conciliar. He was a firm believer that church and state must exist together, but the church must always have the upper hand. Gregory VII also did much to centralize and strengthen the papacy. He was both controversial and a fierce defender of the church, and loyal and sound of doctrine. He was an early defender, for example, of the Real Presence regarding the Eucharist. A wider views sees St. Gregory VII as a giant of the papacy and medieval church, and contentious in his age. He had a religious passion for justice, and pursued a pure church free of external interference. Though he died in exile, his legacy left the church in a position of strength that would serve his successors well in shaping western Christendom. Canonized in 1606, his feast is celebrated 25 May.



**OFFERING:** During the month of April, the congregation offered the monastery \$3,609 through the Sunday collection. Thank you for your generosity!

**WEBSITE:** Please visit the Abbey website: [www.saintmarysabbey.org](http://www.saintmarysabbey.org) for this newsletter and more up-to-date information about the Abbey. The school [website](#) also has many up-to-date events and new it.