

AUGUST 21



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we walk together in this pilgrimage of faith, guided by the Holy Spirit, we pause to celebrate the life and witness of St. Pius X, whose feast we celebrate this Thursday. His life is a clarion call to rediscover the radical beauty of our baptism, to live as a people reborn in Christ, and to proclaim the kerygma - the saving love of God - to a world in desperate need of hope. Let us open our hearts to the Word of God and allow St. Pius X to guide us deeper into the mystery of Christ's love, as we strive to become a living sign of the Kingdom in our families and parish community.

St. Pius X, born Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto in 1835 in the humble village of Riese, Italy, was a man rooted in the simplicity of the Gospel. From his early days as a poor farmer's son to his ascent as the 257th Successor of St. Peter, he never lost the heart of a shepherd who walked closely with his flock. As a parish priest, bishop, and later pope, he remained a father to the poor, the suffering, and the lost, always pointing them to Christ. His life challenges us to ask: Are we truly living as brothers and sisters, supporting one another in our journey toward holiness? Are we close to those who suffer, sharing their crosses as Christ shared ours?

One of St. Pius X's most enduring legacies is his love for the Eucharist, which he called the "source and summit" of Christian life. In 1910, through his decree *Quam Singulari*, he lowered the age for First Holy Communion, ensuring that children as young as seven could receive Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. He understood that the Eucharist is not a reward for the perfect but a medicine for sinners, a divine encounter that transforms us from within. Pius X's zeal invites us to examine our hearts: Do we approach the Eucharistic table with the awe of children, trusting in God's mercy? Do we allow the Body and Blood of Christ to renew us, making us missionaries of His love in a world that hungers for meaning?

Pius X's pontificate (1903–1914) was marked by his courageous stand against the errors of modernism, a movement that sought to dilute the truths of the faith with secular philosophies. Yet his response was not one of pride or condemnation but of a father's love for the deposit of faith entrusted to the Church. **He issued the encyclical *Pasce Domini Gregis* (1907) to warn against these errors, emphasizing that faith is not a human construct but a living relationship with Jesus Christ, crucified and risen.** Like Pius, let us ask to be unafraid to stand for the Gospel, even when the world mocks or rejects us. The Holy Spirit, who strengthened Pius X, accompanies us in our weakness, giving us the words to announce God's love to those who have drifted far from Him.

St. Pius X also championed the renewal of sacred music and liturgy, believing that worship should lift our hearts to God. His motu proprio *Tra le Sollecitudini* (1903) called for the restoration of Gregorian chant and active participation of the faithful in the liturgy. **Pius X understood that the liturgy is not a performance but a foretaste of heaven, where we encounter the Living God.** Let us ask ourselves: Do we enter into the liturgy with our whole being, offering our lives as a sacrifice of praise? Are we allowing the Word of God, proclaimed and sung, to penetrate our hearts and transform our daily lives?

As a pastor, Pius X was a man of deep prayer and simplicity. His motto, "*Instaurare Omnia in Christo*" ("To restore all things in Christ"), was not merely a slogan but a way of life. He sought to renew the Church by returning to the essentials: Christ, the Eucharist, and the call to holiness. The Word of God, Christ, which cuts like a two-edged sword, reveals our sins and calls us to conversion. The Eucharist, where Christ makes Himself present among us, shows us that Christ has a heart that gives itself to those in misery. Parish life, which bears witness to the world that God's love is real and transformative, calls us to holiness. St. Pius X's life reminds us that this renewal begins in our own hearts.

The world today is not so different from the time of Pius X. We face our own challenges - secularism, relativism, and a culture that rejects God. Yet, like Pius, we are called to be a prophetic sign, a people who live for Christ. May Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother, guide us on this journey.

Peace, 