

## Pilgrim Year of Preparation February 2016

### FEATURED DATES

**1 – National Day of Prayer for the African American Family**

The USCCB marks this special day to pray for the African American Catholic community in the United States. On this day, please pray for black Catholic WYD pilgrims and past WYD alumni.

**2 – World Day for Consecrated Life**

Instituted by St. John Paul II in 1997, this day is an opportunity to pray for women and men in consecrated life, connected to the Feast of the Presentation. On this day, pray for WYD pilgrims and alumni from religious communities, and all WYD participants discerning consecrated life.

**Year of Mercy: Consecrated Life Jubilee**

In Rome today, Pope Francis closes the Year for Consecrated Life in a special jubilee event.

**3 – Feast of St. Blaise**

A medical doctor and bishop, St. Blaise is commonly invoked with the annual blessing of the throats. Pray today for good health.

**7-14 – National Marriage Week USA**

Annual week supported by the USCCB to strengthen marriage. Pray for all married couples, and for all discerning marriage.

**9 – Pączki Day/ Shrove Tuesday/ Mardi Gras**

Today, we feast! Pączki Day is the Polish version of Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras), where filled donuts (called pączki) are eaten before Lent begins.

**10 – Ash Wednesday**

Beginning of the Lenten Season, as we hear: "Remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return." On this day, a significant number of young adults (both active and inactive in their faith) attend Ash Wednesday services and Masses. In that spirit, please pray for young people who have disconnected from the practice of the faith and for Catholic communities, that they might be welcoming of those who seek Christ on this special day.

**10 – Year of Mercy: Missionaries of Mercy**

In Rome today, Pope Francis sends forth the "missionaries of mercy," priests sent to share and model the lovingkindness of the Good Shepherd in their preaching, ministry, and through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**11 – World Day of the Sick**

Pray for all those who are suffering from sickness, disease, pain, or chronic conditions. Pray also for those who minister to them.

**12 – Abraham Lincoln's Birthday**

Sixteenth president of the United States.

**14 – World Marriage Day**

Sponsored by Worldwide Marriage Encounter, World Marriage Day is an opportunity to learn about the family and reflect on its meaning for society. Pray especially for World Youth Day pilgrims and alumni who are married or are discerning marriage as vocation. Check out the For Your Marriage website from the USCCB.

**Feast of St. Valentine of Rome**

Even if the exact identity of this martyr is unknown, today is a day to pray for all those in relationships (dating, engaged, and married).

**15 – Presidents' Day**

On this day, pray for the President and for all those who serve the nation in public office.

**22 – Feast of the Chair of St. Peter**

The Church celebrates the gift of the papacy in the Church. On this day, pray for the Holy Father Pope Francis and all his predecessors.

**George Washington's Birthday**

First president of the United States.

**27 – Anniv. of St. John Paul II's 1981 USA Visit**

St. John Paul II made a stopover for several hours in Anchorage, Alaska; this event was the largest gathering of people in Alaska's history.