

Monday in 26th Week in Ordinary Time (II) – 28th September 2026:

In the book of Job, Satan does not yet mean the devil in the sense of an *'evil one'*, but more in the sense of a *'devil's advocate'*, the one who will accuse us of our hypocrisy and speak up against us. Too often we try to convince ourselves that everything is all right, or that we are not really to blame because of the special circumstances we find ourselves in, or worse still, it is really someone else's fault, in fact, it is anyone's fault but my own! Even in the confessional, rather than just confess what we have done wrong, we often bring out a long-convoluted story to explain ourselves. We know life is never plain sailing and so, there will be a series of struggles, but this does not mean that God has abandoned us. The book of Job reassures us that God does not test us beyond our measure and will always give us the grace necessary to carry our cross.

Feast: The Archangels: Michael, Gabriel & Raphael – Tues. 29th Sept. 2026:

Scripture gives us the names of the three archangels: Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. St Gabriel shows that our fear is often misplaced, saying to Our Lady *'do not be afraid, for you have found favour with God'*, that in baptism, we have been chosen and consecrated as a child of God. However, we should never be complacent, for although original sin has been removed, concupiscence remains. And so, we pray to St Michael *to defend us in battle, be our defence against the wickedness and the snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls.* Raphael is tasked with healing the disturbed communion between Tobit and Sarah. He heals their love, driving away the demons that prevent them from giving themselves to one another in a selfless and sacrificial love. And so, we ask his intercession to help us have a healing encounter with Christ.

The Memorial of St Jerome, Priest – Wednesday 30th September 2026:

St Jerome says, *'Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ'*. And Jesus says, *'if anyone wants to be a follower of mine, he must renounce himself, take up his cross daily and follow me'*. Are we prepared to follow after someone that we do not know? A simple way of knowing Christ is to read the gospels. We are grateful that we can read them in English rather than the Greek and ironically, we have St Jerome to thank for this, for he translated the gospel into Latin, the vernacular (*or vulgar language*) of the common people, hence his bible will be forever known as the *'vulgate'*.

Memorial of St Therese of the child Jesus – Thursday 1st October 2026:

Therese entered the Carmel at 15, dying at 25 from tuberculosis. Yet, she is declared a *'Doctor of the Church'*, as she speaks of a *'little way'*, that small services, done with love, can lead to holiness: *'I will seek out a means of getting to Heaven by a little way—very short and very straight little way that is... new. We live in an age of inventions; nowadays the rich need not trouble to climb the stairs, they have lifts instead. Well, I mean to try and find a lift by which I may be raised unto God, for I am too tiny to climb the steep stairway of perfection. I must remain little... I must become still less.'*

The Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels – Friday 2nd October 2026:

Is it credible to believe in angels? We look to the credibility of Christ who speaks of their reality. We look to the wonder of our own being – why should we exist? And just because we cannot see them, this may speak simply of our own limitations rather than evidence that angels do not exist. We can look to other matters of faith that we hold as true: our belief in the Resurrection makes belief in angels a walk in the park! We confess our belief in the Holy Spirit, but there appears to be no tangible way of proving His existence, and yet the Church has throughout her history attested to the effect and fruits of the Spirit. And we believe that the bread and wine, transform into the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ! So, what does a Guardian Angel do? They watch over us and protect us, but what are they protecting us from? They are less concerned with our physical safety but watch out for our spiritual welfare. Remember when we anoint the sick, the healing is primarily associated with the soul rather than the body, and the same is true of angels. As St Jerome says, *'how great the dignity of the soul, since each one has from his birth an angel commissioned to guard it'*.

The Blessed Martyrs of Sussex – Saturday 3rd October 2026:

This feast commemorates ten of the many Martyrs of Sussex who gave their lives for their Catholic Faith over a period of 140 years. These included priests Edmund James and Ralph Crockett who refused to recant their Catholic Faith and were executed in Chichester. And Fr. Thomas Pilcher from Battle who was brutally and clumsily executed; the crime of being a Catholic priest who could not accept the King as supreme head of the Church in England. Others included Henry Weblay and Edward Shelley whose crime was the sheltering of Catholic priests, many whom travelled to Seminaries and Monasteries in France or Rome to be trained for the English Mission.