



# Third Week in Ordinary Time

## Fact of Faith

### The Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle—January 25

*During this Third Week in Ordinary Time, the Church celebrates the conversion of St. Paul the Apostle.*

When the Jewish Pharisee Saul set out from Jerusalem to Damascus, his aim was to persecute the fledgling Christian community. The dramatic story of St. Paul's miraculous conversion is told several times in the Acts of the Apostles and New Testament letters. Paul became the apostle to the Gentiles and carried Christ's message around the Roman Empire. He also shares a feast day with St. Peter on June 29. The January feast was known as the "translation" of St. Paul in the martyrology of St. Jerome; it may originally have commemorated the moving of Paul's relics. Now, it appropriately closes the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Paul is the patron saint of Greece, Malta, and the Cursillo movement.

—Catholic News Service

## A Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

*On January 22, the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision, the Church recognizes a Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children.*

### Prayer for Life and Dignity

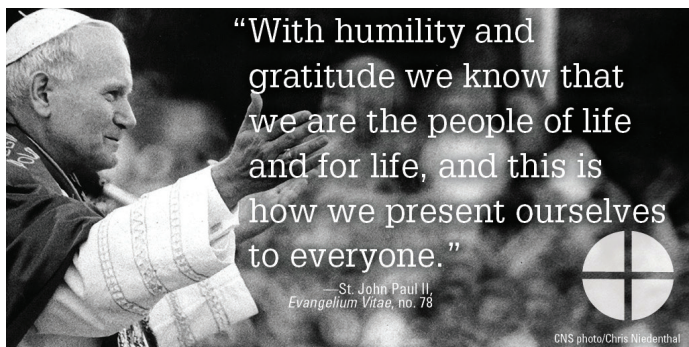
Eternal God, creator and sustainer of life,  
bless us with the courage to defend all life  
from conception to natural death.

Bless us with the strength to respect all peoples  
from east to west, from north to south,  
so that we may truly follow the call of Jesus  
to be neighbor.

We ask this in the name of Jesus,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy  
Spirit.

Amen.

—Prayer from *Being Neighbor:  
The Catechism and Social Justice*,  
USCCB, April 1998



## Saint of the Week

Angela Merici  
1470–1540

Feast Day —  
January 27

By age 26, Angela had lost most of her wealthy Italian family to death. As a Franciscan tertiary, she performed good works and taught catechism to girls

in her home in Desenzano del Garda. Two visions inspired her to found a congregation dedicated to the religious training of young women; she began this mission with a school in Brescia in northern Italy. Earlier she had endured an episode of blindness while on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and had rejected a papal request to run all charities in Rome. In 1535, she founded the Ursulines and served as superior until her death. This mystic, a patron of catechists, reportedly was fascinated from childhood by the legend of St. Ursula, an early virgin-martyr.

