



27 APRIL

**BLESSED NICHOLAS ROLAND, Priest
(1642-1678)
Priest Founder of the Sisters of the Holy Child**

Memoria ad libitum

Nicholas Roland was born at Reims (France) December 8th 1642, attended the Jesuit College in that city before going on to Paris to Study philosophy and theology. Ordained priest 1667-68? (records lost during Revolution) . Upon his return to Reims in 1665, he was named Canon of the Cathedral, as was John Baptist de La Salle the following year. When De La Salle returned to Reims from the seminary in Paris after the death of his parents, he took Roland as his spiritual director. Roland encouraged De La Salle to continue his studies and to take minor orders in preparation for the priesthood.

Meanwhile Roland had come in contact with Father Barré in Rouen, whose Sisters of Providence were actively engaged in schools for poor girls. This motivated Roland to establish something similar in his native Reims. The arrival of two dedicated women from Rouen in 1670 provided the foundation for a new community that would become the Sisters of the Child Jesus of Reims. Roland died at the age of 37, exhausted from his attempts to get approval for the Sisters and a victim of a fever contracted while attending to them during an epidemic. On his deathbed, he named De La Salle executor of his will, thus engaging for the first time the newly-ordained Canon to the ministry of Christian education for the children of the poor.

Died 26 April 1678

Beatified 16 October 1994

MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Lk 4: 18

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free. Alleluia.

PRAYER (COLLECT)

O God, you inspired your priest Blessed Nicholas with pastoral zeal for the training of the clergy and the education of poor young people. Through his example and intercession give us the same spirit of charity so that we may serve you by serving those whom you love. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ.

READING

Col 1: 24-29

I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church, of which I am a minister in accordance with God's stewardship given to me to bring to completion for you the word of God, the mystery hidden from ages and from generations past. But now it has been manifested to his holy ones, to whom God chose to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; it is Christ in you, the hope for glory. It is he whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. For this I labor and struggle, in accord with the exercise of his power working within me.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 88

R) I will proclaim the word of the Lord to the assembly.

I will sing of your mercy forever, Lord
proclaim your faithfulness through all ages.
For I said, "My mercy is established forever;
my faithfulness will stand as long as the heavens.

I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will make your dynasty stand forever
and establish your throne through all ages.

I have chosen David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him.
My hand will be with him;
my arm will make him strong.

My faithfulness and mercy will be with him;
through my name his horn will be exalted.
He shall cry to me, 'You are my father,
my God, the Rock of my salvation!'

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 13: 34

Alleluia, Alleluia.

I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Jn 15:9-17

This I command you: love one another.

A reading from the gospel according to John

As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. * No one has greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, * because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Brothers and sisters, let us humbly implore Almighty God, through the intercession of Blessed Nicholas Roland, for our salvation and that of our communities. Let us pray to the Lord:

R) Lord, hear our prayer.

Intercessions...

Let your grace, O Lord, make our prayers and our efforts pleasing to you. Through the intercession of Blessed Nicholas Roland, we ask you to extend your merciful hand over us. Through Christ our Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord, accept the gifts your people bring in memory of Blessed Nicholas Roland. May our sharing in this sacrifice help us to express in our lives the power of your love. Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Mt 28: 20

And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. Alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

All powerful God, may this holy meal help us to follow the example of Blessed Nicholas Roland, your priest, by showing in our thoughts and deeds the light of your truth and the love of our brothers and sisters. Through Christ our Lord.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Common of saints: educator

INVITATORY

We recite the Invitatory Psalm at the beginning of the Hours: it comes before the Office of Readings or the Morning Office (Lauds) depending on whether you begin with one or the other.

Ant. Come, let us praise the Spirit of God, who has filled Blessed Nicholas with a love for poor children.
(T. P. Alleluia).

OFFICE OF READINGS

SECOND READING

He has chosen the path of service, following in the footsteps of the Son of Man.

From the Homily for the Beatification of Blessed Nicolas Roland given by Pope John Paul II.
(Acta Apostolicae Sedis, October 16th 1994)

The Son of Man has come to serve (Mk 10. 45). Jesus explains to the two brothers James and John that in his Kingdom greatness is based on the willingness to serve: "Anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be slave to all" (Mk 10, 44).

In the course of today's Sunday Liturgy, we are raising five new Beati to the altars. Their lives were characterized by a generous consecration of themselves to God and the generous service of their brothers. Among them, we find Nicolas Roland, a priest and the Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus. The crucified and risen Christ, who now lives in glory, was the inspiration of all that Nicolas Roland did. In the course of his life, which was short but deeply spiritual, he was always ready to ensure that the Redeemer could fulfill his mission as High Priest through him. Taking the person of Christ as his exemplar. He proclaimed his love to those he was training for the priesthood in order to inspire them with mercy. He would say to them: "The immense love of Jesus for you is greater even than your infidelity". This faith and this unshakeable trust in the merciful love of the Incarnate Word led him to found the Congregation of the Sisters of the Child Jesus, who consecrated themselves to the educational apostolate and the evangelization of poor girls. He would often say with great conviction: "The orphan girls represent for us Jesus Christ in his infant state". God be praised who, precisely at a time when the Synod of Bishops on the Consecrated Life is taking place, has given us in Nicolas Roland. Who gave priority to the education of the poor, a living example for so many religious men and women of our time. You have in him a very sure guide. If he has any message for you today, it is that of the greatness of God's love. He used to say: "Whatever we do in the service of God can never equal what we owe him".

His realization of the absolute transcendence of the Almighty led him to cry out in admiration at God's work: "Nothing that is created can fill a heart that God alone can satisfy". Each day, for the sake of your contemporaries who thirst for the absolute, may you draw on the treasures of spiritual doctrine which he has left you and which you wish so much to pass on to others. I encourage you to take inspiration from him as you proclaim the Good News in your mission as educators and catechists, a mission which is more urgent than ever at the present time.

How can we fail to recognize in this life which was so short—less than forty years—a living example for the consecrated persons of our time? I end with a final thought from Nicolas Roland which can be of benefit to us all: "Love silence and keep it willingly, for it is the guardian of virtue".

RESPONSORY

1 Thess 2: 8; Gal 4: 19

R/. We felt so devoted and protective towards you, and had come to love you so much, that we were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but our whole lives as well. * Because we had come to love you so much

V/. My children! I must go through the pain of giving birth to you all over again, until Christ is formed in you
* Because we had come to love you so much.

PRAYER

O God, you inspired your priest Blessed Nicolas with pastoral zeal for the training of the clergy and the education of poor young people. Through his example and intercession give us the same spirit of charity so that we may serve you by serving those whom you love. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ.

MORNING PRAYER

Ant. Ben. The man of God welcomes the light that searches his deeds and finds them true.
(T. P. Alleluia).

INTERCESSIONS

My brothers, let us praise Christ, asking to serve him and to be holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life. Let us acclaim him.

R) Lord, you alone are the holy one.

Intercessions...

Our Father.

PRAYER

O God, you inspired your priest Blessed Nicholas Roland with pastoral zeal for the training of the clergy and the education of poor young people. Through his example and intercession give us the same spirit of charity so that we may serve you by serving those whom you love. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ.

EVENING PRAYER

Ant. Magn. Let the children come to me, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these (T. P. Alleluia)

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray to God, source of all holiness, to help us lead a life worthy of our baptism, through the intercession and example of Blessed Nicholas Roland.

R) Sanctify us, O Lord, for you are holy.

Intercessions...

PRAYER

O God, you inspired your priest Blessed Nicholas Roland with pastoral zeal for the training of the clergy and the education of poor young people. Through his example and intercession give us the same spirit of charity so that we may serve you by serving those whom you love.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ.

