

The foundation for the famous college of theology which was later known as the Sorbonne were laid in Paris about the year 1257. Its head, Master Robert de Sorbon, a learned canon and doctor, was the King's friend and sometimes his confessor. Louis helped to endow the college and obtained for it the approval of Pope Clement IV. It was perhaps the most famous theological school of Europe. The King himself founded in Paris the hospital of Quinze-vingt, so named because it had beds for three hundred patients. He also received indigent persons daily and saw that they were fed; in Lent and Advent he cared for all who came, often waiting on them in person. He had, as we have said, a passion for justice, and changed the "King's court" of his ancestors into a popular court, where, seated in his palace or under a spreading oak in the forest of Vincennes, he listened to any of his subjects who came with grievances and gave what seemed to them wise and impartial judgments. The feudal method of settling disputes by combat he tried to replace by peaceful arbitration or the judicial process of trial, with the presentation of testimony...

One day, after standing godfather to a Jewish convert who had been baptized at St. Denis, Louis remarked to an ambassador from the emir of Tunis that to see the emir baptized he would himself joyfully spend the rest of his life in Saracen chains...

Dysentery and other diseases broke out among the crusaders, and Louis' second son, who had been born at Damietta during the earlier crusade, died. That same day the King and his eldest son, Philip, sickened, and it was soon apparent that Louis would not recover. He was speechless all the next morning, but at three in the afternoon he said, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and quickly breathed his last. His bones and heart were taken back to France and kept enshrined in the abbey-church of St. Denis, until they were scattered at the time of the Revolution. Louis was strong, idealistic, austere, just; his charities and foundations were notable, and he went on two crusades. Little wonder that a quarter of a century after his death the process of canonization was started and quickly completed the man who was "every inch a king" became a saint of the Church in 1297, twenty-seven years after his death.

\*(excerpted from: guardduty.wordpress.com)



St. Louis IX.. St Francis.. and St. Elizabeth of Hungary

**SAINT LOUIS IX, IS THE PATRON OF THE  
THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS**

He led crusades against that wicked religion called Islam.

He was a defender of justice.

He was professed into the Third Order of St. Francis.

He spent many hours in prayer and penance.

# Saint Louis IX

**Feast Day: August 25**



**Throughout his life, he kept in his heart  
the admonishment of his mother:  
"I would rather see you dead at my feet  
than guilty of a mortal sin."**

## ***SAINT LOUIS IX*** ***KING AND CONFESSOR***

\*Louis was born in 1214 and became King of France when twelve years old. His mother, the half-English Blanche of Castile, was regent during his minority, and an influence while she lived. In 1234 Louis married Margaret of Provence, sister of Eleanor the wife of Henry III of England (no, not the couple from *A Lion in Winter* -- that was Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine: this is two generations later).

St. Louis the King of France is first and foremost the great defender of the Church and the Catholic Faith. A magnificent model ideal for boys and young men who dream of wielding swords and fighting the enemies of Holy Mother Church in the Crusades. However, here he bears the Crown of Thorns, more precious to him than his own earthly crown since it was the crown worn by the King of Kings, the Savior of Mankind.

All his life, St. Louis had a special devotion to the Crown of Thorns and Passion of Our Lord. He built the magnificent Saint Chapelle in Paris to house three Thorns from the Crown Our Lord wore in the Passion. He knew well that the obligations of leadership were to be understood as sacrifice: to rule meant that he was obliged to carry the weight of the kingship and to always sacrifice his own personal tastes to represent the needs and desires of his subjects. Today we have lost the idea of this elevated conception of sacrifice. Many of our age assume that a man should place wealth and power at his own service and pleasure. This is completely different from the notion born from Christian Civilization in the Age of Faith.

Obviously, a man like Saint Louis was able to order the highest lords of France, but simultaneously he chose to serve the most humble of men, which he used to do once a year, when he personally used to serve at a table of the poor of Paris. This very Catholic tradition was called the Feast of Deposuit, in a reference to the Magnificat of Our Lady, when She sang: Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles (He hath put down the mighty from their seat and exalted the humble). To rule was to serve, to embrace the Cross, and this model-ideal ever after remained for all earthly rulers.

In Louis IX of France were united the qualities of a just and upright sovereign, a fearless warrior, and a saint. This crusading king was a living embodiment of the Christianity of the time: he lived for the welfare of his subjects and the glory of God...

After taking the government of the realm into his hands, one of the young King's first acts was to build the famous monastery of Royaumont, with funds left for the purpose by his father. Louis gave encouragement to the religious orders, installing the Carthusians in the palace of Vauvert in Paris, and assisting his mother in founding the convent of Maubuisson. Ambitious

to make France foremost among Christian nations, Louis was overjoyed at the opportunity to buy the Crown of Thorns and other holy relics from the Eastern Emperor at Constantinople. He sent two Dominican friars to bring these sacred objects to France, and attended by an impressive train, he met them at Sens on their return. To house the relics, he built on the island in the Seine named for him, the shrine of Saint-Chapelle, one of the most beautiful examples of Gothic architecture in existence. Since the French Revolution it stands empty of its treasure.

Louis loved sermons, heard two Masses daily, and was surrounded, even while traveling, with priests chanting the hours. Though he was happy in the company of priests and other men of wisdom and experience, he did not hesitate to oppose churchmen when they proved unworthy...

In 1230 the King forbade all forms of usury, in accordance with the teachings of the Christian religion. Where the profits of the Jewish and Lombard money-lenders had been exorbitant, and the original borrowers could not be found, Louis exacted from the usurers a contribution towards the crusade which Pope Gregory was then trying to launch...

After recovering from a violent fever in 1244, Louis announced his long-cherished intention of undertaking a crusade to the East. ...On June 12, 1248, Louis left Paris, accompanied by his wife and three brothers. Their immediate objective was Egypt, whose Sultan, Melek Selah, had been overrunning Palestine. Damietta, at the mouth of one of the branches of the Nile, was easily taken. Louis and the Queen, accompanied by his brothers, the nobles, and prelates, made a solemn entry into the city, singing Te Deum. The King issued orders that all acts of violence committed by his soldiers should be punished and restitution made to the persons injured. He forbade the killing of any infidel taken prisoner, and gave directions that all who might desire to embrace the Christian faith should be given instruction, and, if they wished it, baptized. Yet as long as the army was quartered around Damietta, many of his soldiers fell into debauchery and lawlessness. The rising of the Nile and the summer heat made it impossible for them to advance and follow up their success. After six months they moved forward to attack the Saracens on the opposite side of the river, in Mansourah. The ranks of the crusaders were thinned more by disease than by combat. In April, 1250, Louis himself, weakened by dysentery, was taken prisoner, and his army was routed.

During his captivity, the King recited the Divine Office every day with two chaplains and had the prayers of the Mass read to him. He met insults with an air of majesty which awed his guards until he was released.