

# **WITNESS**

## **POPE ST. PIUS X**

“Cometh the Hour cometh the Man”

Giuseppe (Joseph) Sarto was born on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1835 to Giovanni Battista Sarto and Margherita Sanson in the small Northern Italian village of Riese. Just as his patron St. Joseph, had been the guardian of the child Jesus, so Giuseppe Sarto was destined to become the guardian of the Mystical Body of Christ on the Chair of Peter, as the future Pope Pius X.

### **Early Life**

His beginnings were humble; his father was the local “Cursore” or messenger of the local municipality at a salary of three shillings a day; his mother supplemented the family income as a seamstress. Giuseppe was one of ten children and in the Sarto household a truly Christian spirit prevailed. Their happiness lay not in the possession of worldly goods, but in their faithfulness to God’s will and both father and mother worked tirelessly to provide for their large family.

Giuseppe was a happy child. He was fun loving, took part in school activities and showed an extraordinary ability at study for a child of his age. He was a diligent student and possessed a deep appreciation of the things of God. Don Fusarini, the local parish priest recognized the boy’s spiritual fervour and nurtured its development. One day, while explaining the Catechism, Don Fusarini said “I will give an apple to anyone who can tell me where God is”. Giuseppe jumped to his

feet and declared “And I will give two apples to anyone who can tell me where God isn’t!”

At the age of 10 years Guiseppe made his confirmation and around this time he confided to his mother his desire to become a priest. In view of their poverty this was almost absurd and furthermore, his father Giovanni counted on Guiseppe to supplement the family resources. However, his wife and the parish priest united forces to convince him otherwise. Finally he relented. Don Fusarini lost no time in getting Guiseppe started at the senior elementary school at Castelfranco Veneto. For the next four years he rose at a very early hour, attended Mass and walked four miles to school, often with his sandals over his shoulder to prolong their life. His clothing and diet were insufficient in the severe cold and mists of winter. But the best marks in school were his, in spite of his poverty. Count Louro Quirini who was at school with Guiseppe recalled,

“ I was a boarder, Sarto was a day boy. I remember him distinctly. I remember his shabby clothing which provided us with no little amusement; I remember seeing him pull his ‘lunch’ out of his satchel and consume it ravenously. But he was dear to us all; he never complained of his poverty, was always cheerful, and was the best boy in the school.”

Guiseppe knew of the financial sacrifice his parents were making on his behalf so he tried to earn a little money by giving lessons to the children of well to do families in the neighbourhood. He excelled in his academic studies, but where were the fees to come from in order to attend the seminary? By an ancient privilege, the Patriarch of Venice had the right of assigning a few free places in the seminary of Padua to poor boys of the diocese who wanted to become priests. The answer finally came on August 28<sup>th</sup> 1850 and he was accepted

into the seminary. By his extraordinary application to study, his attentiveness to prayer and his cheerfulness at recreation, he made full use of all that the seminary had to offer and quickly won the esteem of his professors and the affection of his companions. He had at last found the atmosphere where his priestly vocation could flourish. His professors wrote of him,

“In discipline second to none, of the greatest ability, blest with a very great memory and giving the highest promise.”

In 1852, his father Giovanni died leaving his mother to care for eight young children. After the summer holidays, Guiseppe was forced to go door to door begging in his village of Riese in order to raise enough money to pay for books and other items essential to seminary life. However, the good people of Riese gave generously knowing that their donations would be used in the training of a zealous priest.

### Priesthood

Guiseppe Sarto was ordained on 18<sup>th</sup> September 1858 by Bishop Farina. For Fr. Sarto it was the beginning of a new life, entirely dedicated to the salvation of souls. His first parish was that of Tombolo. It was a town composed mainly of cattle dealers and brokers. They were a shrewd people and much attached to money. Furthermore they were given to blasphemy, more from lack of thought than from malice. Fr. Sarto, ready for a life of sacrifice and service, was to write,

“We live, alas! In times when the priest meets with contempt, hatred and persecution; but it is in this very fact that we are to find our greatest comfort, because there is in it a secret virtue and strength. If you put it into action you will be amazed at the results”.

His parishioners were astonished at the poverty of his clothing – shoes with wooden soles and a coat that aroused sympathy in all who saw it. He was poor but he had come on an errand, simple and precise – the salvation of souls. He quickly established a good relationship with the parish priest, Don Constantini, to whom he deferred kindly. Fr. Guiseppe rose very early, opened the church, made his meditations and celebrated Mass. He was never known to refuse anyone who summoned him and was in constant activity. His leisure moments he spent in prayer. He prepared sermons and Catechism into the early hours of the morning and slept about four hours a day. The parishioners of Tombolo listened willingly to what their new curate had to say because they knew that he practised the Gospel he preached and they felt instinctively that he lived in the presence of God. Demonstrating his humility and willingness to be guided – when he presented one of his first sermons to Don Constantini, the latter replied,

“My dear Don Bepi (a nickname), this is not a sermon – it is utter rubbish – no more of this rubbish please”

Fr. Sarto smiled humbly and altered it. The parish priest commented, “Ah beautiful Don Bepi, but you must be careful, for it would never do to have the curate preaching better than the parish priest!”

His sermons became so famous that he was often asked to preach by neighbouring parish priests. Don Constantini became ill for almost a year and Fr. Sarto had to run the whole parish. Much of his time was spent consoling the afflicted, calling people to their duties, settling rows, making peace in families, organizing the choir and even taking classes when the schoolteacher was absent. All this was apart from his sacramental duties.

The Eucharist was the centre of his life. When he offered Mass his flock were entranced by the intensity of his faith. He took great care that the sick and dying should not be left unattended and he visited the poor and those in need many times a day. Want of his own necessities of life, hard work, the bad weather and the long journeys along bad roads, day or night, didn't enter into his calculations. Not a few of the inhabitants of Tombolo actually saw their curate faint through sheer weakness. He showed great love and tenderness towards the dying.

Fr. Guiseppe gave away everything he had, be it to the orphan, the penniless broker, the farmer or widow unable to support their families or the sick without medicine. To those who advised prudence and self consideration, he would simply reply,

“What is the use of clinging to the things of this world which we must leave sooner or later? Is it not better to give them in charity to the poor?”

On one occasion he had been given five pounds from a benefactor and the parish priest said – “ now you will be able to buy some clothing for yourself”. Fr. Sarto replied, “but I have given it all away”. He could refuse no one in need. Nothing was safe in his hands. His sister Rosa had saved for a long time to buy a pair of linen sheets badly needed for the house. She entrusted the money to her brother to make the purchase. He set off for town and some time later returned with no sheets and no money. The money had been distributed to a few poor boys who were begging because they had no food.

“They could wait for the sheets but could the children wait for their morsels of food”, was the reply to his disappointed sister.

Fr. Sarto was asked, due to the influence of Don Constantini, to deliver an important sermon on the life of St. Anthony of Padua at the Cathedral of Treviso. As a result and much to his dismay, he was given the post of parish priest of Salzano, one of the most important parishes in the diocese. The Tombolians were devastated to lose their “pearl of a priest”. Instead of Guiseppe Sarto – they called him Guiseppe ‘santo’, so much did they recognize his saintly qualities.

### Ministry at Salzano

At 32 years old Fr. Sarto was sent to Salzano. The Salzanese were bitterly critical of his appointment. A peasant, the son of a Cursore, whom they regarded as an uneducated rustic upstart, was to be parish priest of illustrious Salzano. A representative body headed by Councillor Bottacin approached Bishop Zenelli who replied “ I am giving you the curate of Tombolo as parish priest and in this I am doing Salzano a great favour.” The representatives were dumfounded, glancing at the pale-faced, half-starved looking figure, known to be a priest only by his black clothing and known by his evident fatigue to have walked a long way from Tombolo to Treviso. But the ragged figure was soon to change their hearts.

On July 1867, Fr. Sarto gave his first sermon in the church of Salzano. After he laid out his plans for the parish, all their prejudices were scattered. Each was convinced that the new priest was a friend, a man of god and a born pastor of souls. A few days later he began his parish visitation and every sorrow, ambition and interest was disclosed, to become the sorrow, ambition and interest of the parish priest, for he held each member in his heart. Fr. Sarto was convinced that the prime means of implanting virtue was the constant, thorough and enthusiastic teaching of the catechism and that if this means was neglected, the faith of his people would languish and die.

He introduced a system of dialogue instruction and by this method he imprinted the truths of the faith more easily in the minds of his flock. He encouraged devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the Forty hours, May devotions, explained the Gospels and he prepared the children for First Holy Communion.

With Fr. Sarto there were no formalities, no dread in the heart of the visitor; there was an open door, a broad smile, a kind word and a hearty welcome, no matter their problems or how busy he was. As in Tombolo, his charity knew no bounds. His sisters saw his clothing, wheat, flour and even his meals vanishing. If they wanted to keep anything in the house, they had to hide it so that he could not get his hands on it. Famine raged in 1868 and Fr. Sarto simply left his doors open with his stock of grain and logs at the disposal of anyone who needed them. He even pawned his ordination gifts in Venice to help those in need. His greatest joy was in giving and his only sorrow that he could not give more. In 1873, an epidemic of cholera broke out and the people and their pastor were sorely tried but Fr. Sarto persisted in ministering to his people, administering the last Rites, carrying their coffins and burying the dead. He was almost reduced to a skeleton himself.

But the Salzanese were to lose their beloved pastor when he was made Canon at the Cathedral of Treviso. The Bishop required a spiritual director for his seminary as well as an assistant for the Bishop himself. A tearful Fr. Sarto left Salzano very early in the morning of September 17<sup>th</sup> 1875. The Bishop was to write of Salzano,

“A wonderful religious spirit flourishes in Salzano. There is a happy united community; attendance at the Sacraments is consoling; a

great number of children at Communion and the greatest regularity in everything concerning the worship of God”.

### Monsignor, Bishop and Cardinal

Mgr. Sarto’s wisdom had not been derived from books but from his long experience of pastoral life and with this quality he set about the task of the formation of the seminarians under his care. For him, the salvation of souls sprang from the spirit of priesthood. Regarding the seminary, his duties were considerable; the reading of the meditation in the morning; the weekly conference; the explanation of the Gospel on Sundays; the monthly day of recollection; confessions on Wednesdays and Saturdays for about 230 students and a continual readiness to discuss with students any material problems or difficulties of the spiritual life. In his conferences and sermons he stressed the dignity of the priestly vocation, the importance of zeal for souls, deep but unostentatious holiness, obedience and love of study, but above all detachment from things of the world and readiness to sacrifice all, even life itself, in carrying out one’s duties in the cause of Christ. His severity was always tempered with mildness and sympathy.

Many believed that he was a candidate for the episcopacy but to anyone who voiced that suggestion Mgr. Sarto replied,

“while the priest carries the cross under his dress it is a sweet burden, but when he is forced to wear it over his clothing, though it be of pure gold, he has a chain around his neck”.

He was keenly aware of the grave responsibility therein.

Nevertheless, in November 1884, despite much pleading on his part

to be relieved of this duty – he was made Bishop of Mantua. The Gospel of that day was the parable of the leaven and the new Bishop was to be the leaven which would bring new life to the Church of Mantua. Nine years in Treviso had produced many affections and he asked his former seminarians to pray for poor Mgr. Sarto. He left again early in the morning with tears in his eyes.

Beginning his new ministry, Bishop Sarto was to write,

“Your new Bishop, poorest of all, has but one ambition – to see all the children under his care united into one large happy family in the shelter of which their souls will be safe..... I know I shall have to undergo great fatigue, encounter dangers, suffer insults and strive against the foe, but my people will ever find me firm at my post, always meek and full of charity”. Thus he began the restoration of the diocese which was to become the splendour of Lombardy.

There was a great shortage of priests and the few left were divided in the politico-religious struggle of the time. Socialism, Liberalism and Freemasonry were prominent doctrines at the time in 1885 and according to Dal-Gal \* Continental Socialism and Liberalism have always been strongly tainted with anti-clericalism. Former Bishop Rota had grappled with Masonry to his detriment. Bishop Sarto began with reforming the seminary which was in a lamentable condition. Only one priest was ordained in 1885 but within a few years due to the generous offerings of the people, rich and poor, the seminary accommodated 147 candidates for the priesthood. According to Bishop Sarto - the false doctrines of the day could not be studied too much in order to well-equip his students. He increased the Philosophy and Theology courses and even taught some of these himself. He greatly cared for his clerics. For clothing or fees, he supplied them or if they needed extra food or medicine he

procured it. For the next two years Bishop Sarto lived with his clergy and people walking from parish to parish addressing their needs both physical and spiritual. Parish visitation was always high on his agenda. He constantly stressed to his priests the importance of giving the people a thorough grounding in the knowledge and spirit of their religion. Thus he set up schools for Christian Doctrine for both adults and children. In a pastoral letter of 1894 Bishop Sarto was to write, "If a priest at ordinary times must be a paragon of virtue, how much more so in times like ours? Priests cannot live in solitude; it is their duty to go among the people in the very heart of the town.....take care not to accept any liberal ideas, which under the mask of good, seek to reconcile Justice with Iniquity. You will be called Papist, clerical, retrograde, intolerant, but pay no heed, have courage."

In the nine years of his episcopate he was never idle. He preached a homily every day and if one of his parish priests was unable to do so he would come and supply for him. On one occasion, a well known professor from an academy in Mantua was dying and had declared that he wished to die as he lived, far away from the Church and the Sacraments. The Bishop sent word to the hospital that his friend "Sarto" wished to see him. The professor was deeply touched by this act of delicate courtesy and agreed to see him. By the next morning the whole city knew that the professor had confessed, received the last rites and had died reconciled to the Church which he had so often attacked during his life. When he had been nominated Bishop of Mantua the mother of a wealthy parishioner of Salzano had presented him with a beautiful Episcopal ring, set with a stone of great value. On visiting the Bishop subsequently, he informed her that the stone had been replaced with glass and sold to relieve the needs of the poor. Such was his lack of concern for personal material possessions. Another story is related of the Bishop's compassion

when one Signor Moneta a Socialist of Mantua, had distributed a venomous libel anonymously against the Bishop. The Bishop was advised to denounce him to the civil authorities but he refused saying that the unhappy man was more in need of prayer than chastisement. Some time later the man in question suffered a reversal of fortune and was thrown into extreme poverty. The Bishop hearing of this, instructed a young lady to bring a certain sum of money to the man's wife but not to mention the name of the donor. However, if pressed she was to say that it could be attributed to a very pious Lady known as "Comfort of the afflicted".

Bishop Sarto was one of the first Bishops in Italy to raise his voice against "Modernism" or "Modern Christianity". In his pastoral letter of 1887 he wrote,

"Not a few, having but a superficial knowledge of religion and knowing less of its practice, dare to take upon themselves the office of teachers, declaring that the Church must now adapt itself to the needs of the times; that it is absolutely impossible for her to preserve her laws in their ancient integrity; in this modern Christianity, the folly of the Cross is forgotten and the dogmas of Faith are twisted to fit in with the ideas of a new philosophy".

The Bishop believed that heresies were not born in a day nor did they develop overnight. They established their roots through a series of movements and events and by the time they become visible, it is generally too late and the strength of the organ is undermined.

Again much to Bishop Sarto's dismay, for he planned to spend the rest of his life as Bishop to the Mantuans, Pope Leo XIII created him Cardinal Patriarch of Venice. As Cardinal he redoubled his efforts in service of his flock. He solemnly believed that he had a sacred duty to defend the truth openly, for God would ask him to render an

account of any souls lost because of his negligence. He seldom visited Rome and was reported to have told his nephew Giovanni who was a parish priest; “ Giovanni, when I am too old to push my cart, I shall come to you as curate”. But that was not to be. Pope Leo XIII passed away on July 20<sup>th</sup> 1903. Cardinal Sarto left Venice, the City of the Lagoon, for the conclave to elect a new pope. His parting words to his flock, as he left by train to Rome were,

“Dead or alive I shall return to you”. After a lengthy conclave his brother Cardinals elected him to the Chair of Peter. He had no desire whatever to become Pope and stated that he must go back to his Venetians, that they were awaiting his return. But the die was cast and he humbly accepted the Pontificate. The young man who had to beg for money to pay for his books at the seminary all those years ago, took the name of Pius X.

### Papacy

His motto for his papacy was “Instaurare omnia in Christo” – To renew all things in Christ. Interestingly, it was stated that this Pope had taken over the government of the Church at a very critical moment in her history; at a moment when free rein was being given to the errors of false theologians and thousands of Catholics were being kept from a proper understanding of Catholic Action. A quote from Dal-Gal\* suggests to us that the problems facing Pope Pius X in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century were remarkably similar to our times,

“Many Catholics were of the opinion, either because of ignorance or fear of being considered reactionary, that the Church must bring her doctrines into line with modern development. A wave of insurrection against the teachings of the Church flowed throughout the world, and the saddest thing was that the leaders were recruited from the ranks of the clergy, from men holding responsible positions in

schools and universities, from those working in the curiae of Bishops, from priests teaching in seminaries and even from the hierarchy. Not many were aware of the damage and confusion of thought wrought by these modern theories which were widely propagated in books, newspapers and periodicals”.

In his Encyclical letters, for example, “Pascendi Dominici Gregis”

Pius X sought to answer these pressing issues. He wrote,

“One of the primary duties of the Apostolic Office is to disprove and condemn erroneous doctrines and to oppose civil laws which are in conflict with the Law of God, and so to preserve humanity from bringing about its own destruction”. On these questions he was adamant.

He set about reform firstly by organizing pastoral visitation in the city of Rome, creating new parishes and building new churches wherever housing schemes were in progress. He appealed for greater attention to the teaching of the Catechism worldwide in order that his flock were carefully instructed in the fundamentals of their faith. He attributed the religious crisis and havoc caused in the church by Modernism to an ignorance of Christian Doctrine. Of his priests he wrote,

“Each one must do his best to reform himself, because society is a mirror which reflects the spirit of the individual, of the family, of the city; and if each of us does his best to let Christ reign in his heart, then the whole society will be conquered for Christ”. The means for achieving this consisted of prayer, meditation, humility, examination of conscience, obedience and self-denial in imitation of Christ Himself. He furthermore set about the reform of the seminaries, along with the teaching of the basic principles of sound philosophy.

He also promoted study of the Scriptures among the clergy and oversaw the collection into one book, of the laws which govern the discipline of the Church, now known as the Code of Canon Law. Many indeed were the reforms introduced by Pius X. during his relatively short papacy.

### Characteristics of the Man Pius X

Whether they be Governors of States, kings, ambassadors or ordinary folk – all felt at ease in his presence and they were deeply impressed by his compassion, simplicity, spirit of faith and concern for their welfare. He abhorred ostentation and splendour. He forbade applause when he entered St. Peter’s Basilica and on receiving visitors he refused to stand on ceremony. His personal staff was reduced to a minimum and he often conversed with them asking about their work and their families. When others complained that he was too informal he replied,

“Who is higher and who is lower in the eyes of God? Don’t forget that God sees things on a different plane.” The poorer and simpler the visitor, the happier Pius X seemed to be, just as he had been as curate and parish priest years before. The people of Tombolo and Salzano came to visit and were received as if he were their beloved Fr. Guiseppe.

In 1904 the Archbishop of Palermo died and a delegation of nobles came to Rome to ask the Pope to preserve the tradition of having as Archbishop, an aristocrat and a Doctor of Theology. The request immediately brought to the mind of Pius X the thought of the little cottage of Riese. He replied sternly, but with a sense of humour,

“ I know a curate who was neither a noble nor a Doctor of Theology who was appointed parish priest; that parish priest was made a

canon and then a Bishop; that Bishop, who was neither a Doctor of Theology nor an aristocrat, was created Cardinal and then elected Pope, and it is the Pope who is now speaking with you”.

In the Vatican he was referred to as “the kind-hearted Pope”. He possessed a wonderful blend of gentleness yet firmness. As regards material possessions he hadn’t any. His private rooms were simply furnished and his meals were frugal. When he became Pope a certain jeweller presented him with a golden pectoral cross. He accepted it thinking it belonged to the Papal insignia, but a few days later a bill appeared for the item. The cross was promptly returned saying “no certainly not! You must not pay so much for a cross which I am to wear – besides I still have the one I used at Venice”.

### Miraculous Events

It was said inside and outside the Vatican walls that many miracles were attributed to the intercession of Pius X. On hearing this he said, “Now they are saying and printing in papers that I have started working miracles, as if I haven’t enough to do already....”

But the people were not wrong for many miraculous healings occurred during his Pontificate. During a general audience, a certain man with a paralyzed arm presented himself asking – “Holy Father, heal me that I may earn bread for my poor family”. The Pope took the paralyzed arm in his hand and said – “have confidence in the Lord – only have faith and the Lord will heal you”. As the Pope turned to walk away the power returned to his arm.

On another occasion, a young Irish girl whose head was completely covered in sores, begged her mother to bring her to Rome with the words “I will be healed, because if Jesus gave his apostles power to work miracles, why should he not have given it to His Vicar on

earth?” Against the advice of their doctor, they took the journey to Rome. As the Pope moved through the crowd he was moved at the sight of the girl whose head was covered in bandages. He put his hand on her head and blessed her. Suddenly the child called out – “mammy I am healed”. The mother was astonished and when they unrolled the bandages, there wasn’t the slightest trace of a sore.

In one of the audiences, he met a woman carrying her little child who had been born blind. The compassionate eyes of the Pope met the pleading eyes of the mother. “Pray to the Lord and have confidence”, he said. The child opened her little eyes and her first sight on earth was the smiling gaze of the Pope.

On another occasion, as he passed through the crowd he saw a pitiful sight. A crippled child, along with his father and mother had come all the way from Germany. The child was lying on the ground. The Pope bent down and picked up the child in both arms and said, “Come, come now you must try to walk”. He put the child down on both feet and he ran to his father and mother.

The number of miracles attributed to the intercessory prayer of Pius X is astonishing. The volume of letters from all over the world asking for blessings and healing was truly remarkable, such that the Secretariat of State had to work overtime to cope with the enormous correspondence.

Pius X possessed the gift of prophecy. When he was Cardinal of Venice, he was acquainted with a couple who lived in Rome and whose son had died at the age of eighteen. The mother was distraught and almost lost her mind. The Cardinal came to Rome and visited her with words of encouragement. He told her she would have another child. The husband related that his wife had been told in 1884 by experienced doctors that could not have any more

children. However, nineteen years later she became pregnant and had a son, who received his First Holy Communion when he was seven years old, from the hands of Pope Pius.

The prophecy which most pained Pius X was the coming of the Great War in 1914. In 1906 he called the Bishop of Belley in France to Rome and told him he was being appointed as Archbishop of Rheims. The Bishop protested and asked to be allowed to remain in his own diocese. The Pope informed him that in Rheims he would have a heavy cross to bear. The Bishop believed that the Pope was referring to the difficult relations between France and the Vatican at that present time. However, eight years later when the Gothic cathedral of Rheims and a large part of the city lay in ruins, he recalled the Pope's prophecy.

### A Broken Heart

The last days of his papacy were darkened by great anxiety. On May 20<sup>th</sup> 1914 he held his last Consistory. He addressed the College of Cardinals with the words,

“Today more than ever we must search for that peace as we look on helplessly at the hatred which the different nations and classes bear one another, fearing that the growing discord will develop into dreadful battles....”

One month later on June 28<sup>th</sup>, newspapers reported the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife at Sarajevo. This was the match that lit the fires all over Europe. Pius X pleaded with the warring nations, that they would do everything in their power to preserve the peace. Meanwhile eight countries mobilized their armies for war. The Austrian ambassador asked him to bless the armies of the Danube, to which the Holy Father replied,

“I bless not armies but only peace” – but it was too late – the war had started. He made another final appeal on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1914. Particularly anguishing for him was when he had to say farewell to his theology students leaving Rome to return to their own countries to fight in their national armies. These young men, united in their faith and their love for the Pope, would face one another as enemies at the battlefield.

Under the impact of the war, his heart was broken and his health deteriorated. Towards evening on 19<sup>th</sup> August the great bell of St. Peter’s rang out proclaiming that the Pope was dying and at 1.15am. on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August he closed his eyes in death.

The whole world bowed in reverence before the greatness of this unique Pope. The French Protestant newspaper, ‘Le Temps’ wrote

“Pius X was never led by the motives which determine human decisions. His faith alone was the light which illumined his path.”

The ‘London Times’ wrote,

“all who appreciate the true meaning of sanctity must unite themselves with the Catholic Church which weeps today for the loss of a holy priest, a great bishop and a famous Pope”.

The Socialist paper ‘L’Humanité ‘ of Paris wrote,

“A great Pope has died. His politics were extremely simple; they consisted in restoring the values of faith with apostolic force. He could conduct this policy with authority because the simplicity of his soul and the sincerity of his virtue were never doubted. Judge him as you wish, you must admit he was a great Pope”.

The inscription on his tomb reads:

“Pius X; poor and rich; meek and humble of heart; strong defender of the rights of the Church; labouring to restore all things in Christ”

Pius X was canonized on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1954 by Pope Pius XII.

His feast day is 21<sup>st</sup> August.

Reference: “Pius X – The Life Story of the Beatus”

By Fr. Hieronymo Dal-Gal (1954)