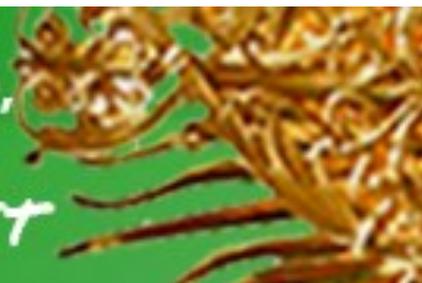




# Pray for Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty JOIN THE MOVEMENT



## August 9: Friday Fast (St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross)

### Intention:

For the intercession of the saints to fortify and encourage all those facing religious persecution.

### Did you know?

Last year, Pope Benedict XVI told [the diplomatic corps](#) that even in today's time, "In many countries, Christians are deprived of fundamental rights...; in other countries they endure violent attacks against their churches and their homes. At times they are forced to leave the countries they have helped to build because of persistent tensions and policies which frequently relegate them to being second-class spectators of national life."

Read [more](#) about current threats to international religious freedom.

### Quick Links

- ⇒ [Call to Prayer webpage](#)
- ⇒ [Call to Prayer Facebook group](#)
- ⇒ [Past weekly intentions and reflections](#)

### Reflection:

Today we celebrate the feast of St. Edith Stein, who was born into a Jewish family in 1891 in what is now Wroclaw, Poland. During her studies in philosophy, she encountered the writings of the great Carmelite mystic, St. Teresa of Avila, who inspired her conversion to Catholicism in 1922. In 1933, she joined the Carmelite Order, taking the name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Edith faced significant adversity during her early years in religious life. Recognizing the risk she presented to her fellow sisters during World War II because of her Jewish background, Edith left for Holland and entered the Carmel of Echt. Edith, however, was captured by Nazis and later taken to Auschwitz, where she died in the gas chambers on August 9, 1942.

St. Edith Stein stands as a profound witness for all who seek to live for the truth. Let us recall [her words](#) spoken just a few days before her death: "If I cannot share the lot of my brothers and sisters, my life, in a certain sense, is destroyed." We pray ardently for the grace to stand courageously in the face of religious persecution.

VISIT [WWW.USCCB.ORG/FAST](http://WWW.USCCB.ORG/FAST) TO SIGN THE FASTING PLEDGE & TO SIGN UP FOR WEEKLY E-MAIL REMINDERS & INTENTIONS, OR TEXT "FAST" TO 99000 TO RECEIVE WEEKLY TEXT MESSAGES.