

## Reflection Monday Week 12 St Aloysius Gonzaga 2021

**St Aloysius Gonzaga (1568 - 1591)** was the eldest son of a Mantuan nobleman. His father wanted him to be a soldier but Aloysius was determined to be a missionary and even die for his faith. He renounced his birth-right in favour of his brother and, aged 16, became a Jesuit in Rome, living the same life of severe austerity and penance he lived serving in the courts of dukes and princes. In 1591 a plague broke out in Rome and the Jesuits opened a hospital to care for the sick. Aloysius, still a novice, worked hard in the hospital until he caught the plague. He did not recover so, his determination to die for the faith was fulfilled. He died at midnight on the 20<sup>th</sup> June with the name of Jesus on his lips.

Aloysius certainly showed his love for God and for neighbour handing over his birth-right and giving himself totally in the service of God and his neighbour even sacrificing his life. The love of God lived in him and inspired his generous, selfless service.

Like Aloysius, we are called to care for and nurse our sick planet which suffers from a plague of our abuse, misuse and neglect.

### **A Prayer for our Earth (Pope Francis)**

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of creatures. You embrace with tenderness all that exists.

Pour upon us the power of your love that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us rescue the abandoned and forgotten, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us the worth of each thing. Fill us with awe and contemplation and help us recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.