

## Nov. 26, St. John Berchmans, S.J.

Gerelyn Hollingsworth | Nov. 26, 2009 NCR Today

Today is the feast of [St. John Berchmans](#), [1] 1599-1621.

From an [account](#) [2] of the saint's short life by Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J.:

"Here's a quotation from St. John Berchmans that every Jesuit has memorized. Let me give you the Latin first. It sounds so nice -- '*meus maxime mortificatio est vita communis.*' -- my greatest mortification is community life. I repeat there is no statement of any saints that a Jesuit will not agree with more heartily than that one, that his heaviest mortification, his worst penance, is community life. That doesn't mean you don't like your brethren, but, being human, being oneself and living with other human beings, community life is indeed a great mortification."

In 1955, *Treasure Chest* published a story about the saintly Belgian [altar boy](#) [3] who became a Jesuit. As a student at the Roman College, John Berchmans was delighted to be given the same room Aloysius Gonzaga had occupied.

John Berchmans died at twenty-two, a year younger than Aloysius Gonzaga. The relics of the two young saints are preserved in the [Church of Saint Ignatius of Loyola at Campus Martius](#), [4] part of the Roman College where they studied.

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### Links:

[1] <http://www.sjweb.info/Jesuits/saintShow.cfm?SaintID=48>

[2] [http://www.therealpresence.org/archives/Saints/Saints\\_015.htm](http://www.therealpresence.org/archives/Saints/Saints_015.htm)

[3] <http://dspace.wrlc.org/view/ImgViewer?img=1&url=http://dspace.wrlc.org/doc/manifest/2041/28260>

[4] <http://www.chiesasantignazio.org/en/0391/>