



Celebrating the feast of St. Pius X

August 21 is the feast of St. Pius X, the only canonized member of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of which he was Grand Master.



Giuseppe Sarto, who became the “parish priest to the world”, was born in Riese, in the diocese of Treviso, on June 2, 1835. Ordained a priest in 1858, the year of the apparitions of the Virgin in Lourdes, Giuseppe Sarto was a man of prayer, humble, a worker, “just and righteous to the highest degree”, according to those who knew him.

Having become bishop of Mantua first and then Patriarch of Venice, he fought with courage and determination against “the crime of the modern era” which he defined as: “Wanting to substitute Man for God”.

Though he had a return ticket for the conclave of 1903, he did not, in fact, return to Venice but became Pope under the name of Pius X, “because the Popes who have suffered the most in this century have borne the name of Pius”, he explained. His work – along with his young Secretary of State, Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val, appointed at the age of 38 –, allowed the Church to resist the forces that sought to bring it into subjection or under supervision, because he said, “better sacrifice wealth than freedom”. He died on August 20, 1914, a few days after the start of the First World War.

He is currently the only canonized saint who belonged to the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, of which he was Grand Master. To consolidate the position of the Order in the Holy Land, Pius X reserved for himself and his successors the office of Grand Master by the Apostolic Letter *Quam multa* dated October 13, 1908, and gave the Knights a place in the papal chapels, whilst the Latin Patriarch was appointed Rector and Perpetual Administrator of the Order.

