

Some Thoughts for February, 2026

Marge Loenser

Welcome to February, 2026. This month got its name from the Roman feast of purification known as Februa. Back in the heyday of the Roman Empire, the year consisted of 10 months. Julius Caesar in 46 BC, advised by Alexandrian astronomers, introduced a solar calendar with 365.25 days, adding a leap year every four years. This reform involved the adjustment of month lengths, resulting in some months gaining extra days, while February maintained its original 28 day count, except during leap years. So, you might say that this month is quite unique.

We start off with the Feast of the Presentation, also known as Candlemas Day. This is a combined feast as it commemorates the Jewish practice of purification for a mother after child birth; in this case, our Blessed Mother; it is the Presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple and it is also Candlemas Day--a festival of lights. It is a day when candles are blessed for use during the year. ("It is better to light just one little candle than to stumble in the dark.")

We also remember that February 2nd is Ground Hog's Day, and look forward to hearing from Punxsutawney Phil, our groundhog weather prognosticator.

On Tuesday, the 3rd, we get our throats blessed as we celebrate The feast of St. Blaise, who suffered martyrdom in the fourth century.

February 11, of course, is the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes; Lourdes, France, being one of the most visited pilgrimage sights in the world, where many healings have taken place.

It started in 1858 when our Blessed Mother appeared to a 14 yr. old peasant girl by the name of Bernadette Soubirous. Her incorrupt body is still on display in the Chapel of Saint Girard at the Sisters of Charity in Nevers, France.

St. Valentine's Day falls on the 14th. The church tells us that there were at least three martyred St. Valentines in the early church. One of the imprisoned Valentines was jailed by Emperor Claudius, because he went against his orders and continued to marry young Christian couples. This got him sentenced to death. There, in prison, while waiting execution he would send letters to those he cared for, and signed the letters: "From your Valentine."

Ash Wednesday falls on February 18, and we begin our journey through lent. (wasn't Christmas just a couple of weeks ago?) It is a time for reflection, repentance and preparation for the Feast of the Resurrection. This year Easter is on April 5. The earliest it can fall is March 22, and the latest is April 25 (my birthday). We should all get more involved with a richer prayer life and more spiritual activities this lent. I just started a bible program whereby the entire bible will be studied in a year. Right now we just finished Noah and the flood. Whatever we decide to do will certainly lead us closer to Jesus and when we ask for His Holy Spirit He will give it to us in abundance.

I'd like to leave some comforting words for those that have lost a loved one. This little saying really touched my heart: "The people we love become a part of who we are, and when they pass from us, a part of them stays with us." God bless you all. Happy Valentine's Day and let's have a spiritually active lent this year. Love, Marge



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