

- 1 Two thousand years ago, some leaders of the Roman Empire were called “Caesar”. It is from that word that the Germans (at the time of the First World War) named their leader “the Kaiser”. Also from the word “Caesar”, the Russians called their emperor “the Czar”.
- 2 Nicholas II was the last Russian Czar. He refused to take advice except from his wife, who was under the influence of the mad Rasputin. Nicholas led the country to a disastrous war with Japan in 1904, and he resisted all moves towards any kind of democracy. He gave poor leadership over 23 years, and particularly during the First World War against Germany, when 2 million Russian soldiers died in 1915 alone, and starvation gripped the country. All these factors contributed to the need for a major change. The Russian Revolution took place in 1917 and Communism became the way of life as the country became known as “the Soviet Union”.
- 3 During the night of 16th/17th July 1918, Tsar Nicholas II and his family were killed on the orders of local Soviet officials. After being shot, their bodies were burned and thrown down a mine shaft.
- 4 After the Fall of Communism in 1991 and the break-up of the Soviet Union, the bones of the Czar and his family were eventually DNA-matched with such distant relatives as Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. The Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, decreed that the remains of the Russian Royal Family would be buried on 1st March 1998. In the Russian Orthodox Calendar, that day is marked as “Forgiveness Sunday”, when people look at their past mistakes, pray for God’s forgiveness, and consider how they can make up for what they have done wrong.

5 *Let us pray:*

Loving Lord,
you tell us in the Bible
that whatever wrong we have done
you tread down our faults
to the bottom of the sea. Mic 7¹⁹

We know there is no need
to keep thinking
about what we have done
in the past, Is 43¹⁸
because you pardon
the wrongs we have done,
and you delight
in showing mercy. Mic 7¹⁸

You bind up all our wounds Ps 147³
and you renew us
by your love. Zeph 3¹⁷

Lord, you love
all that you have made, Wis 11²⁴
and it is your very nature
to love and forgive.

Lead us to be generous
in accepting and forgiving others
in the same way
as you accept and forgive us.

Amen.

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:

www.prayingeachday.org