

9 SEPTEMBER

- 1 If someone asked
what happened exactly a year ago today,
would we remember?
 - 2 If someone was to ask
what happened in Britain
on this day in 1752,
the answer would be “nothing”!
 - 3 There **was** no 9th September
in Britain in 1752.
The day after the 2nd September
became the 14th.
11 days were “lost”!
Why was this?
 - 4 The arrangement of days in the year
- the calendar -
had been worked out in Roman times,
but the Romans
had made a slight miscalculation
for the length of the year
(being the exact time
that the earth goes round the sun,
giving us the different seasons.)
 - 5 And so, by 1752, nature’s seasons
were getting more out of line:
the calendar was 11 days out,
resulting in Spring, for example,
gradually occurring sooner
as a date in the calendar.
In the same way, the dates associated
with planting and harvesting
were changing.
 - 6 The government realised
that they had better alter the calendar,
as many other countries had already done.
And so it was decided
that 11 days should be “lost”.
 - 7 It seems funny to us,
but some people thought
that they were being “cheated”
out of 11 days,
and that they would die 11 days sooner!
- There were riots in parts of the country
as some people demanded
that the government
give them back their “stolen” 11 days!
- 8 *Let us pray,*
**thinking of those who look back
and wish they had an extra day
or more time:**
 - those who have too little time
for what they are expected to do;
 - those who have lost
a sense of balance and proportion
in their lives;
 - those who feel
that they have made a mess
of everything
and would like to be able
to start again.
 - 9 **We pray, too,**
for those who might wish for less time:
 - those who are worried
about what might happen;
 - those who are in despair;
 - those who suffer
hours of pain and illness;
 - those who are in prison
or being tortured;
 - those who wish to die.
 - 10 **On all these people, Lord,
we ask your blessing.**

longer than the “solar year”, gaining a whole day every 128 years. By 1582, the “vernal equinox” (the date - in March - when day and night are equal in length) took place a fortnight earlier than in Caesar’s time, affecting the timing of religious holidays (such as Easter, being the first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox), and the dates associated with planting and harvesting. Pope Gregory XIII decreed that the date after 4th October 1582 should be 15th October, eliminating the 10 days by which the calendar had become “out of season” with the solar year and nature. Accuracy would be maintained by removing 3 days every 400 years - and so leap years now occur every 4 years except if the century year cannot be divided by 400.

👉 Britain, a Protestant nation, decided not to accept the Pope’s ruling. It was only in 1752 (as mentioned in today’s reflection) that Britain and its Colonies abandoned the Julian Calendar and adopted the Gregorian Calendar (by which time the calendar was not 10 but 11 days out). Britain’s late change-over explains why reference books in countries other than Britain record, for example, the birth of Sir Isaac Newton as 4/1/1643 (Gregorian Calendar), whilst British texts record 25/12/1642 (according to the Julian - or “Old Style” Calendar by which England was still living at the time).



👉 Or could use the prayer from 23 March.

👉 Could use this material on any day from 3rd-13th September inclusive, adapting the date in the first line of the third paragraph above, accordingly. It can be used to good effect with new members of a school in the month of September - possibly then using or adapting one of the prayers from 9 Feb, 6 April, 6 May, 2 June, 13 July, 20 Aug.

👉 It was Pope Gregory XIII (the 13th) who proposed the new “Gregorian Calendar” which we now follow. Before that time, the “Julian Calendar” (based on the “Julian Year” established by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.) was followed, but the “calendar year” was 11 minutes and 14 seconds

👉 The Soviet Union adopted the Gregorian - or “New Style” - Calendar in 1918, which explains why their “October Revolution” (Oct 24th/25th in the Julian Calendar) is now marked in the month of November (6th/7th Nov, Gregorian Calendar). Some countries linked with the Greek churches hold religious feastsdays according to the Julian Calendar, celebrating Christmas some 13 days after other countries.

👉 “Carpe diem - Seize the present day, trusting the morrow as little as may be.”
(Horace, 65-8 BC;
quoted in the film, ‘Dead Poet’s Society’)

& Lord of all hopefulness; This day God gives me; This is the day