BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Raphael Kalinowski

Life, prayer, novena and pilgrimage

Feast day: November 19

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IN BRIEF

Saint Raphael Kalinowski

Polish engineer and insurgent deported to Siberia who became a Discalced Carmelite (1835-1907).

Feast day	November 19
Born	September 1, 1835, Wilno (Vilnius, Lithuania)
Died	November 15, 1907, Wadowice (Poland)
Canonized	November 17, 1991 by John Paul II
Era	20th century
Patron saint of	deportees and exiles in Siberia, soldiers, educators, railway workers, engineers, young people

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Carmelite Monastery of Czerna

Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Raphael Kalinowski

Saint Raphael Kalinowski, born Józef Kalinowski in Wilno (Vilnius) in 1835, was in turn a military engineer, a Polish insurgent leader, a convict in Siberia, a prince's tutor and then a Discalced Carmelite. Ordained a priest at forty-six, he was the driving force behind the renewal of the Carmelites in Poland. He died at Wadowice on November 15, 1907 and was canonized by John Paul II in 1991. The Carmelites celebrate him on November 19.

Who was Saint Raphael Kalinowski?

Few saints have had such an eventful life. Józef Kalinowski was born in a Poland divided among its neighbors, when Vilnius belonged to the Russian Empire. Trained in a Russian military school, he was a brilliant engineer before joining, reluctantly, the Polish uprising of 1863. Sentenced to death, he had his sentence commuted to ten years of forced labor in Siberia. It was in this trial that his vocation matured. Having become a Carmelite under the name Raphael of Saint Joseph, he devoted the rest of his life to prayer, confession and the restoration of his order. He is a witness to reconciliation: for him, we can only forgive if we know that we ourselves are forgiven.

Key dates in the life of Raphael Kalinowski

- **September 1, 1835**: Józef Kalinowski is born in Wilno (Vilnius), then in the Russian Empire.
- **1852**: He enters the Military Engineering School in Saint Petersburg; he becomes an engineer and teaches mathematics.
- **January 1863**: The Polish uprising begins; he leaves the Russian army and heads the insurgents' war department in Lithuania.

- **June 2, 1864**: Arrested, he is sentenced to death; the sentence is commuted to ten years of forced labor in Siberia.
- **February 2, 1874**: Released, but barred from Lithuania, he becomes tutor to the young Prince August Czartoryski, whom he accompanies to Paris.
- **July 15, 1877**: He enters the novitiate of the Discalced Carmelites in Graz and takes the name Raphael of Saint Joseph.
- **January 15, 1882**: Ordained a priest, he becomes prior of the monastery of Czerna, near Kraków.
- **1884-1906**: He founds or restores monasteries at Przemyśl, Lwów and Wadowice, and organizes the Secular Carmelites.
- **November 15, 1907**: Dies at the Wadowice monastery; he is buried at Czerna.
- **June 22, 1983 and November 17, 1991**: Beatified in Kraków, then canonized in Rome by Pope John Paul II.

The engineer and the insurgent

The son of a mathematics teacher, Józef lost his mother a few weeks after his birth. After brilliant studies, he made a career in the Russian military engineering corps and worked on the railway line between Kursk, Kiev and Odessa. It was in Kursk that he read the Confessions of Saint Augustine and that a deep conversion began in him. Later posted to the fortress of Brest-Litovsk, he saw at close quarters the repression suffered by Polish and Lithuanian Catholics. When the uprising broke out in 1863, he judged it doomed to failure: "The Polish land needs the sweat of our brow, not our blood," he said. Yet he agreed to head the insurgents' war department in Lithuania, while refusing to order executions.

Siberia, a school of prayer

Arrested in 1864 and sentenced to death, he narrowly escaped execution thanks to his family's intervention. Then began a long journey to Siberia, by train, by boat and then on foot, during which many deportees died. He reached the penal camp of Usolye, near Lake Baikal, in April 1865. There he showed great charity toward his companions. He wrote: "The world can deprive me of everything, but there will always remain one hidden place it cannot reach: prayer." Settled in Irkutsk after 1868, he heard there the call to the priesthood.

The Carmelite and confessor

Released in 1874, he became tutor to the young Prince August Czartoryski and lived for a few years in Paris, among the Polish emigrants. In 1877, at forty-two, he entered the Discalced Carmelites in Graz. After his studies in Hungary, he was ordained a priest in 1882 and appointed prior of Czerna. From then on he worked to revive the Carmelites in Polish lands, where they had almost disappeared: foundations at Przemyśl and Lwów, a monastery and minor seminary at Wadowice, the organization of the Secular Carmelites, the gathering of the archives of the old monasteries. Above all, he was a much sought-after confessor and spiritual director, who spent long hours welcoming penitents. He died at Wadowice on November 15, 1907.

Canonization and devotion

His reputation for holiness was immediate. In 1966, the Archbishop of Kraków, Karol Wojtyła, himself a native of Wadowice, preached at Czerna beside his remains. As pope, he beatified him in Kraków on June 22, 1983 and canonized him in Rome on November 17, 1991. The Roman Martyrology commemorates him on the day of his death, November 15; the Carmelite

order, which remembers its departed on that day, celebrates his feast on November 19. He is invoked for deportees and exiles, soldiers, educators, railway workers, engineers and young people.

What can we learn from Saint Raphael Kalinowski?

Raphael Kalinowski went through the great trials of his century without letting himself be locked into hatred. A soldier who refused to kill, a convict who served his companions, a priest who spent his days forgiving in God's name, he shows that prayer is a place of freedom that no one can confiscate. You can pray to him for prisoners and exiles, for soldiers, for reconciliation between peoples and for those who discover their vocation late.

To pray with him, see the prayer to Saint Raphael Kalinowski and the novena to Saint Raphael Kalinowski.

Where to pray to Saint Raphael Kalinowski

- **Carmelite Monastery of Czerna** (Lesser Poland): the place of his burial, now a shrine.
- **Wadowice** (Lesser Poland): the Carmelite monastery he founded and where he died.
- **Vilnius** (Lithuania): his native city.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Raphael Kalinowski for Prisoners and Forgiveness

Saint Raphael Kalinowski, a Polish engineer and insurgent deported to Siberia, became a Carmelite and a tireless confessor; he died at Wadowice in 1907. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It entrusts to him prisoners, exiles and all who seek forgiveness.

Prayer to Saint Raphael Kalinowski

Saint Raphael,
you knew prison, condemnation and exile,
and you found in prayer
a place no one could take from you:
teach me to pray in my trials.

A soldier who refused to shed blood,
a convict full of charity for your companions,
keep me from hatred and resentment.
Make me a peacemaker
between persons and between peoples.

You who spent so many hours in the confessional
to give sinners the forgiveness of God,
help me to know that I am forgiven
so that I may forgive in turn.
Watch over prisoners, exiles and soldiers,
and obtain holy priests for the Church.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Raphael Kalinowski

- On his feast day, November 19, or on November 15, the anniversary of his death.
- For prisoners, deportees and exiles.
- For soldiers and for peace between peoples.
- Before going to confession, or for confessors.
- For those who discover their vocation late.

A short invocation

> *Saint Raphael Kalinowski, witness of forgiveness,*
> *keep us free in prayer. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Raphael Kalinowski from November 11 to November 19, and read the life of Saint Raphael Kalinowski.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Raphael Kalinowski

This novena offers nine days of prayer with Saint Raphael Kalinowski, an engineer deported to Siberia who became a Discalced Carmelite and died in 1907. Novena composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is not an official liturgical text. To finish it on his Carmelite feast day, November 19, begin on November 11. You can also pray it at any other time.

How to pray this novena

Each day, begin with the Sign of the Cross and entrust your intention to God. Read the meditation, say the prayer of the day, then an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be. End with: "Saint Raphael Kalinowski, pray for us."

Day 1: A child without a mother

Józef lost his mother a few weeks after his birth. God watches over those who grow up in want.

Prayer: Lord, comfort orphaned children, and bless those who raise them.

Act of the day: Pray for the departed mothers of your family.

Day 2: Science and faith

A brilliant engineer, Józef discovered God by reading the Confessions of Saint Augustine. Intelligence can lead to faith.

Prayer: Lord, may my work and studies bring me closer to you.

Act of the day: Read a few lines of Saint Augustine's Confessions.

Day 3: Refusing violence

Involved in the uprising, he refused to have anyone executed. One can defend one's people without hatred.

Prayer: Lord, protect soldiers, and keep them from hatred and cruelty.

Act of the day: Pray for peace in a country at war.

Day 4: Sentenced to death

In 1864 he was sentenced to death, then his sentence was commuted to forced labor. He remained inwardly free.

Prayer: Lord, be close to the condemned and to prisoners, and give them your peace.

Act of the day: Pray for prisoners and prison chaplains.

Day 5: The road to Siberia

For ten months the deportees walked toward Lake Baikal. Many died. Józef supported his companions.

Prayer: Lord, bless exiles and refugees who walk far from home.

Act of the day: Support a charity that welcomes refugees.

Day 6: The hidden place of prayer

"The world can deprive me of everything, but there will always remain one hidden place it cannot reach: prayer."

Prayer: Lord, make prayer the refuge of my heart in all my trials.

Act of the day: Take ten minutes of silent prayer.

Day 7: A late vocation

At forty-two he entered the Carmelites. God calls at every age.

Prayer: Lord, call laborers into your harvest, and give them the courage to answer.

Act of the day: Pray for religious and priestly vocations.

Day 8: The ministry of forgiveness

Father Raphael spent long hours hearing confessions. He taught that to forgive, we must know we are forgiven.

Prayer: Lord, give me the grace to receive your forgiveness and to forgive in turn.

Act of the day: Receive the sacrament of Reconciliation or forgive an offense.

Day 9: Raising up the Carmelites

He revived the Carmelites in Poland. A life given bears fruit far beyond itself.

Prayer: Lord, bless the Carmelite friars and nuns. Through the intercession of Saint Raphael Kalinowski, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will.

Act of the day: Entrust a special intention to the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Closing prayer

Saint Raphael Kalinowski,
you kept the freedom of your heart in chains:
present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you.
Keep me in prayer,
free from all hatred
and quick to forgive.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

You can also pray the prayer to Saint Raphael Kalinowski at any time, and read the life of Saint Raphael Kalinowski.

PILGRIMAGE

Carmelite Monastery of Czerna

The monastery of the Discalced Carmelites at Czerna lies in Lesser Poland, in a wooded valley west of Kraków, near Krzeszowice. Saint Raphael Kalinowski was its prior after his ordination in 1882, and he was buried there after his death in 1907. The monastery has become the saint's main shrine.

A monastery in the forest

Founded in the 17th century, the monastery of Czerna is one of the oldest houses of Discalced Carmelites in Poland. Isolated in the forest, it matches well the ideal of the "desert" dear to the Carmel reformed by Saint Teresa of Ávila and Saint John of the Cross. In the 19th century, when the Carmelites had almost disappeared from Polish lands, Czerna was one of the few places where they survived. It was from here that Father Raphael Kalinowski, as prior, set out to raise up his order again.

The shrine of Saint Raphael

After his death at Wadowice, Father Raphael was buried at Czerna. His reputation for holiness quickly drew pilgrims. In 1966, the Archbishop of Kraków, Karol Wojtyła, preached there beside his remains; as Pope John Paul II, he beatified him in 1983 and canonized him in 1991. Today pilgrims come to pray at the saint's tomb and entrust to his intercession prisoners, exiles, soldiers and those who seek forgiveness.

Praying on site

Before you come, you can read the life of Saint Raphael Kalinowski. At the shrine, entrust to him someone in prison or in exile, a conflict to be calmed or a difficult reconciliation, then say the prayer to Saint Raphael Kalinowski. Since

he was a great confessor, the pilgrimage is also a fine occasion to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation. These suggestions are offered by Saintspedia.

Other places of Saint Raphael

- **Wadowice** (Lesser Poland): the Carmelite monastery he founded, with a minor seminary, and where he died; it is also the hometown of Saint John Paul II.
- **Vilnius** (Lithuania): his native city.
- **Graz** (Austria): the monastery where he made his novitiate in 1877.

Practical information

Czerna can be reached by car from Kraków, via Krzeszowice. The monastery is a place of prayer and religious life: modest dress and silence are requested. Mass, confession and visiting times may vary: check with the Carmelites of Czerna before you come.

Credits and sources

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