

JULY - SEPTEMBER  
2024



# Stella Maris

SUPPORTING SEAFARERS AND FISHERS AROUND THE WORLD

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Christ – God's Creation

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Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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## Stella Maris is a Catholic charity supporting seafarers worldwide.

We provide practical and pastoral care to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, belief or race. Our port chaplains and volunteer ship visitors welcome seafarers, offer welfare services and advice, practical help, care and friendship.

Stella Maris is the largest ship visiting network in the world, working in 332 ports with 227 port chaplains around the world. We also run 53 seafarers' centres all over the world.

We are only able to continue our work through the generous donations of our supporters and volunteers.

**To support Stella Maris with a donation visit [www.stellamaris.org.uk/donate](http://www.stellamaris.org.uk/donate)**

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## NEED HELP?



Please scan the QR code to get in touch, or contact us via WhatsApp or SMS on +44 7883 303529

Stella Maris provides seafarers with practical support, information and a listening ear

# RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

In the 1870s, with the construction of the Doca da Alfândega, the first projects for the development of the Port of Rio de Janeiro emerged. But the inauguration of the Port of Rio de Janeiro did not take place until 20th July 1910. The Port of Rio de Janeiro is located on the west coast of the Guanabara Bay, with an almost seven thousand metre long pier and thirty-one berths. Port Rio de Janeiro is also the third busiest port in terms of cargo volume, and it is a centre for cruise vessels. The Port of Rio de Janeiro loaded and unloaded over eight million tons of cargo including thousands of tons of wheat, dry bulk and paper goods, and millions of tons of iron, steel and liquid bulk cargo, and also thousands of vehicles. The port also has a high turnover of cruise ships passing through the Praça Mauá of the Port of Rio de Janeiro on different cruise vessels. After many changes and developments, the port is now managed by Companhia Docas de Rio de Janeiro. Stella Maris – Rio de Janeiro, founded in May of 1998 by the Missionaries of St Charles – Scalabrinians, is located next to dock 18, inside the Port of Rio de Janeiro. Today it has an active presence in the port, with its chaplains, staff and volunteers. Every day we organise our ship visits, bringing magazines, bibles, rosaries and information to seafarers, and especially our friendship and kindness to them.

Besides that, we often offer our services onboard like Masses, blessing, counselling, ecumenical celebrations and spiritual care. Moreover, we invite all seafarers to our centre, which has telephones, computers, free wifi, a library, a games room, recreations

and documents. We also arrange hospital visits to sick seafarers. From 2009 to 2010, we extended our services to seafarers in the port of Itaguai, which is located in the municipality of Itaguai on the north coast of Sepetiba, a distance of ninety kilometres from Rio de Janeiro city. We also help in small ways by (for instance) buying fruit, fast food and personal items. We do the small things with great love and care for them. Stella Maris is always willing to attend to the needs of all seafarers, respecting their races, cultures and religions; and are happy to be a part of their family whenever they arrive in the Port of Rio de Janeiro.

## STELLA MARIS RIO DE JANEIRO CENTER

Rodrigues Alves Street – inside Port Gate – next to Dock 18

**Mailing Address:** Rua Álvaro Ramos  
385, Botafogo, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil,  
Zip code: 22280-110

**Service Hours:** Mondays to Fridays:  
08:00 – 21:00

**Saturday and Sundays:** by request

**Port chaplains:** Fr Cesare Ciceri, CS.  
and Fr Joseph Nguyen Van Tien, CS.

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# THE CHURCH YEAR AT SEA



## 3RD JULY

### SAINT THOMAS, APOSTLE

St Thomas (first century), called 'the Twin', is chiefly remembered for doubting the reality of the resurrection until he saw the Lord for himself. Once he was satisfied, he made a heartfelt profession of faith: 'My Lord and my God.' St Thomas, who probably suffered martyrdom as a result of preaching the Gospel in India, comforts us when our faith is weak, encourages us to persevere and demonstrates that 'every doubt can lead to an outcome brighter than any uncertainty' (Benedict XVI).

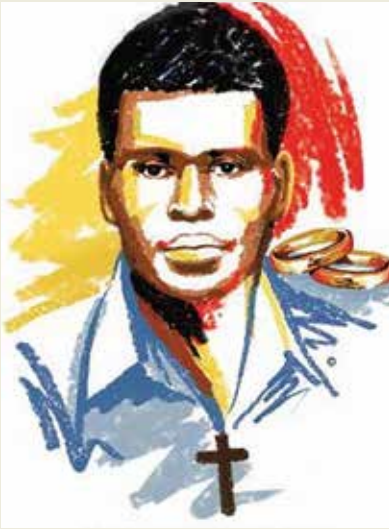


## 6TH JULY

### SAINT MARIA GORETTI, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

St Maria Goretti (1890-1902) was born in Corinaldo near Ancona (Italy), the third of six children, and became known for her cheerfulness and piety. When she was twelve, she was a victim of an attempted rape and was mortally wounded as she defended her virginity. She forgave her murderer shortly before she died in hospital. The culprit was imprisoned and experienced a conversion of heart; he was present at St Maria's canonization in 1950 and ended his days as a Capuchin brother.

7TH JULY



**BLESSED PETER TO ROT, MARTYR**

Blessed Peter To Rot (1912-45) was born in Rakunai, New Britain (Papua New Guinea). His parents belonged to the region's first generation of Catholics. He trained as a catechist and married in 1936, bringing into the world three children. After the Japanese occupation of 1942 and the imprisonment of the local clergy, Blessed Peter worked zealously as the leader of the Catholic community. He was arrested in 1945 and killed shortly afterwards, without trial. He was beatified by Pope St John Paul II in 1995.

16TH JULY

**OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL**

This feast honours the Blessed Virgin as patroness of the Carmelite Order. It later came to be associated with a supposed vision of St Simon Stock, said to have taken place on 16 July 1251. Wearing the 'Brown Scapular', a symbol of the Carmelite habit, is a sign of trust in Mary's maternal help, especially at the hour of death.

24TH JULY

**SAINT SHARBEL MAKHLUF, PRIEST**

St Sharbel or Charbel (1828-1898) was born in Bekaa-Kafra (Lebanon) and became a Catholic Maronite monk, taking his vows at the monastery of St Maron, Annaya. From 1875 he lived as a hermit, with the Holy Eucharist as the source and summit of his life, and his reputation for holiness spread far and wide. He died on 24 December 1898, having suffered a stroke while celebrating Mass.



POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JULY 2024



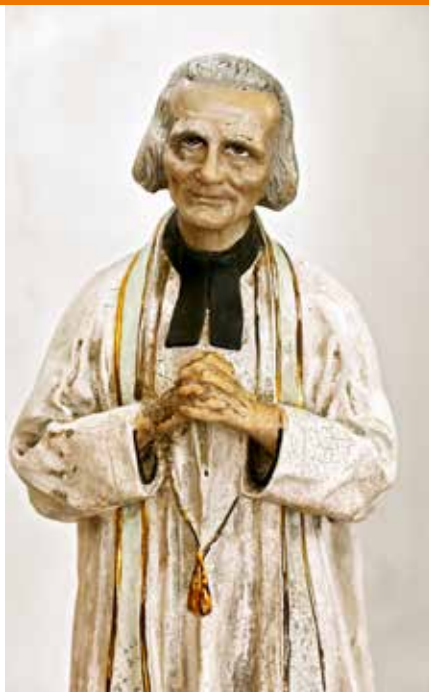
**FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK**

We pray that the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick confer on those who receive it and their loved ones the power of the Lord, and become ever more a visible sign of compassion and hope for all.

## 1ST AUGUST

**SAINT ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, BISHOP AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH**

St Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787) was born in Naples (Italy) and became a priest after training as a lawyer. He founded the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists), which specialised in preaching missions, and in 1762 was appointed Bishop of Sant' Agata dei Goti. He faced much physical suffering and divisions within his Order. His numerous writings, especially on moral theology, earned him the title of Doctor of the Church.



## 4TH AUGUST

**SAINT JOHN VIANNEY, PRIEST**

St John Mary (Jean-Baptiste-Marie) Vianney (1786-1859) was born at Dardilly, near Lyons (France) and, despite finding his seminary studies difficult, was ordained a priest and spent forty-two years as curé (parish priest) of Ars. Despite encountering much opposition, he reformed the parish, spent hours in the confessional and centred his life on the Holy Eucharist. Pius XI declared him patron of parish clergy.

## 10TH AUGUST

**SAINT LAWRENCE, DEACON AND MARTYR**

St Lawrence (+ 258) was one of the seven deacons of St Sixtus II killed during the persecution of Valerian. On his arrest, he was ordered to hand over the riches of the Church but pointed to a crowd of poor people, saying 'Here are the true treasures of the Church.' According to tradition, he was roasted to death on a gridiron.

## 11TH AUGUST

### SAINT CLARE, VIRGIN

St Clare (c.1193-1253) was born in Assisi (Italy) and became a disciple of St Francis. She founded the Order of the Poor Clares or Minoreesses and lived a life of radical poverty at the convent of San Damiano. She wisely led her community for forty years and gave counsel to many high-ranking prelates. Such was the fame of her holiness, she was canonised two years after her death.



## 15TH AUGUST

### THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The Solemnity of the Assumption is, in some ways, the paramount feast of Our Lady, since it commemorates her passing, body and soul, into glory in heaven, where she stands beside her Son 'in garments of gold'. Though the dogma of the Assumption was only defined in 1950, it was widely believed by the earliest Christians. The Blessed Virgin truly leads the way; she fulfilled her vocation in humility and, given her Immaculate Conception, the grave was no place for her body. Where she is now, we one day hope to be.

## 25TH AUGUST

### SAINT LOUIS

St Louis IX (1214-1270) became King of France at the age of twelve. He married Margaret of Provence and had eleven children. He showed great integrity in his rule, always promoting peace and justice and showing great piety and love for the poor. He died of dysentery near Tunis in 1270 during his second crusade for the liberation of the Holy Places. He was canonised in 1297.

## POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR AUGUST 2024



### FOR POLITICAL LEADERS

We pray that political leaders be at the service of their own people, working for integral human development and for the common good, especially caring for the poor and those who have lost their jobs.



## 3RD SEPTEMBER

**SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT, POPE AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH**

St Gregory the Great (540-604) belonged to a Roman patrician family and served as a magistrate before embracing the monastic life. He acted as papal legate at Constantinople and was elected Pope in 590. He tightened Church discipline and liturgical practice, reorganised the lands belonging to the Holy See and sent St Augustine to convert the kingdom of Kent. He is consequently called the 'Apostle of the English' and, thanks to his theological and pastoral writings, is a Doctor of the Church.



## 14TH SEPTEMBER

**THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS**

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross commemorates the rescue of the relic of the True Cross by Emperor Heraclius in 629 after it had been captured by the Persians; it also marks the original dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where relics of the Cross were kept, in 335. The Feast celebrates the Cross, the instrument of our salvation, and is in many ways an extension of Good Friday. The Cross is a great and powerful sign of God's love for us – a love stronger than death – and also a daily reality in our lives: the only true path to holiness.

## 15TH SEPTEMBER

**OUR LADY OF SORROWS**

This feast originated as a memorial of the Seven Sorrows of Mary, most of which were linked to the events of Good Friday, when she stood at the foot of the cross. We remember that the Blessed Virgin had to live through the personal tragedy of seeing her Son die. She had a unique share in our redemption, offering her Son's life to the Lord, trusting that it was part of his plan.





20TH SEPTEMBER

**SAINTS ANDREW KIM TAE-GŎN, PRIEST, AND PAUL CHŎNG HA-SANG, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS**

The Korean Martyrs testify to the presence of the faith in that region from the eighteenth century and the terrible persecutions during the nineteenth century. Outstanding among them were St Andrew Kim Tae-gŏn (1821-1846), the first

Korean-born priest who was tortured and beheaded near Seoul in 1846, and St Paul Chŏng Ha-sang (c.1794-1839), a lay catechist who was crucified on 22 September 1839. More than 8,000 Christians from all walks of life lost their lives during the persecution and 103 of them were canonised in 1994.



POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2024



**FOR THE CRY OF THE EARTH**

We pray that each one of us will hear and take to heart the cry of the Earth and of victims of natural disasters and climate change, and that all will undertake personally to care for the world in which we live.

**Lectio Divina – a short introduction**

How to link up with Jesus and with God if you can't get to Mass? Read the Word of God in scripture. It is like a letter from home, written specially for you – and God is writing to you. Perhaps light a candle to show God's presence.

Take a short passage, perhaps the Sunday gospel. Put yourself in the presence of God, open yourself to God, for God is all around you.

What is God writing to you about? What is Jesus saying to you? Imagine the scene. You are one of the disciples, listening and watching. Ask Jesus what he means for you.

Read the passage again, until it enters your heart. It may help to do this with others, to share with them and learn from them what Jesus is saying to them. Always end with a blessing, a sign of real friendship for your brothers and sisters and a prayer for each one's needs.

# The Healing Power of Christ

## SCRIPTURE

Peter and John used to go up to the Temple for the afternoon prayer; it happened that there was a man being carried along. He had been lame from birth; and they used to put him down every day near the Temple entrance called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for money. When this man saw Peter and John he asked them for money. Peter, and John too, looked intently at him and said, 'Look at us.' Peter said, 'I have neither silver nor gold, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, stand up and walk!' Then he took him by the right hand and raised him up. Instantly his feet and ankles became firm, he jumped up, stood, and began to walk around, and he went with them into the Temple, walking and jumping and praising God. (Acts 3:1-8)

## REFLECTION

Pope Francis' prayer intention for the month of July is the pastoral care of the sick and especially that their sickness may be sanctified by the Sacrament of the Sick. We pray with Pope Francis that this anointing may bring healing to the sick and suffering throughout the world, and enable them to come close to Jesus in his suffering by their own pain and suffering. We can't all work miracles, like Peter and John in the reading, to cure the sickness. But we can all help the sick by even a small gesture or message which shows them Christ's love for all who are suffering sickness, loneliness or depression. The Sacrament of the Sick is not just for the dying, but for any Christian to help him or her grow stronger and closer to Christ by linking the pain and disappointment to Jesus's suffering on the cross. We join our prayers to the Pope's daily prayer.





# God's Creation

## SCRIPTURE

God created great sea monsters and all the creatures of every kind that glide and teem in the waters, and winged birds of every kind. God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply on land.' And there was evening and morning, the fifth day. God said, 'Let the earth produce living creatures of every kind: cattle, creeping things and wild animals of every kind.' And so it was. God made wild animals in their own kind, and cattle in theirs, and all the creatures that creep along the earth in their own kind. God saw that it was good. God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild animals and all the creatures that creep along the earth.' (Genesis 1:20-26)

## REFLECTION

At harvest time, when the fruits of the earth are being brought in, Pope Francis asks us to pray that everyone may look after the earth and its produce and climate, especially in those regions affected by natural disasters and climate change. God has given us plenty of resources, but we can be wasteful of them, careless and irresponsible in our use of them. We should rejoice in the richness and variety of what God has given us. But we are only stewards of the natural resources, not owners. We must remember future generations who will follow us. We show our gratitude to God for his variety of creation by using it well rather than wasting it. Then our children and grandchildren and their children can continue to praise God and to use God's creatures for their benefit.



# Obstacles to Prayer: Frequently Asked Questions



Explore some common obstacles to prayer and discover how to overcome them. Fr Ed Broom, OMV.

➤ ***“I can’t pray because I have a demanding job/I’m too busy with my studies. Work/school takes all my time, and if I take time out, I won’t be any good at my job/studies, and I will fall behind or even get fired/fail my classes.”***

This is your personal experience of the seven distractions I have talked about elsewhere. It is the devil telling you that your job or schooling is the most important thing, which you accept, because your mind works in a fundamentally utilitarian way, meaning that your value and self-worth depend on how much you produce, fostered by materialism – how many goods and honours of this world you can accumulate and enjoy. The decision to put God before all else is the most radical one you will ever make, but in another way it should be the easiest, because everything good in our lives is made better through a deepening relationship with God. If your job, education or other commitments truly prevent you

from praying, the question is not whether you should pray, but whether your work and schooling will bring you true happiness – not just in the next life, but even in this life. St Augustine chased honours, riches and sensual pleasures for the first thirty-one years of his life and was never satisfied. Only when he surrendered his life to Christ was his heart satisfied: “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.”

A good reflection would be to weigh the material things and the pleasures of this short life on earth, on the one hand, against eternity, which is for ever and ever, on the other. Jesus said: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of



heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Mt 7:21).

➤ **“I can’t pray because I don’t know what to say, so I just end up thinking about other things.”**

You are not alone in this! Learning to pray is like learning a new language. It takes effort and discipline, and a good prayer method that is suitable to us.

Most people don’t know what to say; that is why there are different prayer methods. One is a classical method of prayer encouraged by Pope Benedict XVI called *lectio divina*, teaching us how to pray with Scripture, and when we pray with the Gospels, how to enter into the life of Christ and become present to him and he to us.

A second method of prayer builds on *lectio divina* by introducing Ignatian Contemplation given to us by St Ignatius of Loyola. In this prayer, praying with the Gospels, we are attentive to all the scenes in the life of Jesus and we imagine being present at these events – his birth, his private life, his public life of preaching, healing, and casting out demons, his suffering and death on the cross, his glorious resurrection.

As an example, imagine yourself being present when Jesus is born in the stable of Bethlehem – see the poverty of the stable, the humility of Mary and Joseph making the best of these surroundings, the humble and lowly shepherds who are the first to adore the Lord of lords and the King of kings! You are there, you are part of all this, and your heart is filled with awe and wonder. When you are more experienced in this type of prayer, you may find Mary offering you the baby Jesus to hold and adore in your arms.

Picture another scene – stand with Mary, John, and Mary Magdalen beneath the cross. Jesus is nailed to the cross, his body covered with blood from the deep wounds of the scourging, his face covered

with blood from the crown of sharp thorns on his head, for an agonising three long hours. St Ignatius assures us that if you were the only person in the world who needed to be saved, Jesus would have suffered and died on the cross for your eternal salvation.

As Mary stands beneath the cross, Jesus says: “Woman, behold your son”... and to John, “Behold your mother” (Jn 19:26-27). By giving Mary to John, Jesus is giving Mary to each and every one of us to be our mother. What are you thinking? What are you feeling? Knowing that Jesus is giving you his own mother to be your mother, to watch over you and guide you, to pray for you? Knowing that Mary is willingly enduring her great suffering in Jesus’s death on the cross for your eternal salvation?

A second and essential component of practising Ignatian Contemplation is bringing to Jesus your own needs, desires, concerns and wounds. Jesus is the wounded healer. He will comfort and console you in all your trials, and help you discern your path of true happiness in life. Open up to him, talk to him, let his love and concern for you be like a sweet balm on your heart.

In addition to this method of prayer, Ignatius teaches us how to have an ordered prayer life. He gives the reasons to pray, how to pray, when to pray, how often to pray, what to pray, how to handle dryness in prayer, how to get back when we lapse in prayer, ways to see the fruits of our prayer over time, and so much more. Once we learn to pray using Ignatian Contemplation with Jesus in the Gospels, we will find that the whole of Sacred Scripture, both the Old Testament and New Testament, open up to us in a wonderful way for Ignatian Contemplation in prayer.

What is clear is that Jesus is calling each one of us to enter into “the one thing necessary” – a deep, intimate friendship with him through prayer, and not sometimes, or when we feel like it, but all the days of our life.

# Sts Joachim and Anne

## The Grandparents of Jesus

### Tradition

It would be wrong to have any consideration of Christian grandparents without mentioning Sts Joachim and Anne,

the patron saints of grandparents. Like many saints in our calendar we know very little about Joachim and Anne other than they are venerated as the parents of the

Blessed Virgin Mary. We don't know their names for sure but at least we can be certain that the Blessed Virgin had parents. An important question is, what can we know from them and what do they have to say to grandparents today?

As the parents of Mary, they would have brought her up, nurtured her and taught her the ways of their faith. Mary would have learned how to pray from her parents and she would have learned how to bring up children. Rooted in her faith, and as the Gospel tells us grounded in prayer and reflection, Mary was prepared to respond positively to God's request brought by the angel Gabriel. Mary's answer: "Let it be done to me according to your



will” was not the product of a moment’s choice but was a reply that was being formed in every moment of her upbringing and was ultimately a response rooted in the Covenant which her parents had taught her all about. Through the guidance and teaching of Joachim and Anne, Mary was prepared to say a free and informed ‘yes’ to God.

Joachim and Anne represent the tradition of Israel, as does Mary, the heritage of generations of faithful believers who stayed true to the

Covenant that God had made with his people. Each and every grandparent also represents that link with generations before and has the opportunity to pass on the tradition that they have received. For some this will be in the skills of parenting, perhaps a moral code, perhaps the stories of the family. For Christian grandparents the tradition that they pass on is our Tradition, the New Covenant in Christ which invites us to say ‘yes’ along with the Blessed Virgin.

### Anxiety

It is also possible to see how Joachim and Anne would have experienced many of the anxieties of grandparents today. Even before their grandson was born there would have been concern about their daughter having to travel to Bethlehem when heavily pregnant. It is possible that they had to go to a different town to register for the census so would have been separated from Mary at the time of Jesus’s birth. Anne (who is also patron saint of women in labour)

would have been an important part of a birth under normal circumstances so her worry would have been all the greater. The massacre of the innocents must have found Joachim and Anne frantic with worry for their grandchild and the flight of Mary and Joseph into Egypt will have left them worried and bereft, perhaps not knowing where their daughter and grandchild were.

We don’t know if they ever met Jesus but we can imagine their joy on the return of the Holy Family and perhaps their first

meeting with their new grandson.

It is possible that they helped care for Jesus as he grew up and may even have been in the party visiting Jerusalem when he was left behind.

Perhaps Mary and Joseph thought he was with his grandparents when they set off. When Mary stood at the foot of the cross and saw

her son dying she must have drawn on all of her reserves of strength and faith simply to avoid giving up belief and even life itself. These reserves would in no small part be drawn from the tradition and faith passed on to her by Joachim and Anne.

Yes, much of this is speculation, but it does allow us to see some of the universal aspects of what it is to be a grandparent: close and loving but often having to watch events unfold with a sense of powerlessness. Importantly, it also allows us to see the utter humanity of Christ. Jesus the man came from a family with its own history, traditions and stories. His family was not just Mary and Joseph but a line of flesh and blood with all the joys and sorrows of being human.

### Prayer to St Anne:

St Anne,  
mother of the Virgin Mary and  
grandmother of our Lord Jesus.  
You raised your daughter in expectation of  
the Messiah’s coming and encouraged her  
to respond to God’s call in her life.  
You prepared her to accept her call  
to be the Mother of God.  
Help us to be good parents and  
grandparents, eager to enable our  
children and grandchildren to find God’s love.

St Anne, bless and protect our families.

Stella Maris is the largest ship-visiting network in the world. *We improve the lives of seafarers and fishers through our network of local chaplains and seafarer centres, expert information, advocacy and spiritual support.*



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