



I'm No Saint . . . or Am I?

Family Handout

Although the Church gives certain people the official title of "saint," we are all called saints because we are part of the Communion of Saints, all people who have been saved in Jesus Christ. Let's think about some of the things that make us saints.

My greatest strengths as a person are

If I were to describe myself in one word it would be _____

People can count on me to

I work to make the world a better place by

Things I do to keep my friendship with God healthy and strong are

I would make a good patron saint of _____

because _____





The Communion of Saints and You

Family Handout

Our relationship with the Communion of Saints makes our lives richer and brings us closer to God. In this handout, you can learn more about the Communion of Saints and find ways to include the saints in your daily family life.

The Communion of Saints includes all those who have been saved in Jesus Christ—those who are living here on earth and those who now live with God in eternity. “Communion” means that we share in the life of Christ, brought about by the action of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God the Father. Even though each of us is a unique individual, we are joined together in a common love for God, common worship, and common work for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

We should take care of our relationships with one another in the Communion of Saints in the same way we take care of our family relationships. We want to help one another in our common pursuit of God. For example, those of us on earth and in heaven can offer prayers and sacrifices for the holy ones in purgatory as they wait to join God and all the saints in heaven. The saints in heaven intercede for us before God, and they help us by giving us a model of how to live Christian lives.

Celebrating the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, is an important way to stay united in the Communion of Saints. Other ways to nourish our communion with one another and with God include:

- ✦ praying for all the saints of God, our families, loved ones, and for those in need;
- ✦ reaching out to those who are in need, especially people who are suffering or sick and those burdened by poverty or violence; and
- ✦ learning about God and our faith through the reading of Scripture and spiritual books, and talking with other Catholics about our faith journey.

When you do any of these things, it affects not only you but the whole Communion of Saints. Because we are one in Christ who died for all, whatever any one of us “does or suffers in and for Christ bears fruit for all” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* #961).





Getting to Know the Saints

Family Handout

There are many different ways to get to know the saints. Here are a few ideas to get your family started.

1. Celebrate All Saints Day (November 1). One of the great gifts of our Catholic faith is our rich tradition of honoring our heroes with sainthood. On All Saints Day, we recall and pray with these saints. It is important to continue to tell the stories of saints and saintly people to our children so that they have ample models of people of faith for their own lives.
2. Together as a family, name and tell the story of favorite saints. Prepare a list of some of the traits that these people have in common (generosity, courage, prayerfulness, and so on). After preparing this list, read together Matthew 5:1–12, which is the Gospel proclaimed on All Saints Day. Identify how the attitudes described in the Beatitudes are reflected in the lives of the saints and in people you named.
3. As a family, create your own book of saints. Have each family member choose a favorite saint and create a “chapter” about him or her that may include a description, a drawing, or whatever helps to convey your experience of the saint. You might also focus on how this saint showed unusual courage, or devotion, or dedication to others, and how we can learn from his or her example. Assemble each “chapter” into a book. Create a decorative cover for your book and display it in a prominent place in your home.
4. Create an inspiration box based on the lives of the saints. On small cards or strips of paper, write an inspiring quote from a saint or something about a saint you particularly admire (such as “Saint Teresa prayed even on days she felt God was far away”). Use any kind of container (such as a woven basket, a decorated box, or a plastic container) to hold your inspirational words. Whenever you are in need of an inspiring or motivational word, you can read one of the cards.
5. Pray a Litany of the Saints as a family. For example, a parent prays “Saint Elizabeth” and the children are invited to reply “Pray for us.” Include in your list the saints and holy people you named in your discussion. Conclude by praying that your family will follow the example of these people as disciples of Jesus.





Even More Saints by Your Side

Family Handout

"You can never have too many friends," James Martin writes in *My Life with the Saints*. Would you like to meet a few more friends? Here are some places to turn if you are looking for the patron of a particular cause or are simply curious to learn more.

Available from Loyola Press

www.LoyolaBooks.org

- ✦ *Mary and the Saints—Companions on the Journey** from the Catholic Basics series by James P. Campbell
- ✦ *Loyola Kids Book of Heroes: Stories of Catholic Heroes and Saints Throughout History* by Amy Welborn
- ✦ *Loyola Kids Book of Saints* by Amy Welborn
- ✦ *The Loyola Treasury of Saints: From the Time of Jesus to the Present Day* by David Self
- ✦ *My Best Teachers Were Saints: What Every Educator Can Learn from the Heroes of the Church* by Susan Swetnam
- ✦ *My Life with the Saints* by James Martin, S.J.
- ✦ *Mystics and Miracles, True Stories of Lives Touched by God* by Bert Ghezzi

- ✦ *Praying with the Saints** from the Somos Católicos Series by Arturo Pérez-Rodríguez
- ✦ *Saints Kit: All the Saints of the Roman Calendar and More* by the Sisters of Notre Dame
- ✦ *Santos Americanos: Conversando con los Santos de América* by Arturo Pérez-Rodríguez and Miguel Arias

Also Available

- ✦ *Butler's Lives of the Saints: Concise Edition, Revised and Updated* (HarperSanFrancisco)
- ✦ *Encyclopedia of Saints* (Our Sunday Visitor)
- ✦ *Patrons and Protectors: Occupations* (Liturgy Training Publications)
- ✦ *Saints and Martyrs* (Viking Juvenile)
- ✦ *Teach Me About Saints: Discussions and Activities for Young Children* (Our Sunday Visitor)

*Available in both English and Spanish

