



SAINTS FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS



ST. AGNES OF ROME - PATRON SAINT OF THOSE SEEKING CHASTITY AND PURITY

At age 12 or 13 Agnes was ordered to sacrifice her virginity and life to the pagan gods. She was taken to a Roman temple to Minerva (Athena), and when led to the altar, she made the Sign of the Cross. She was threatened, then tortured when she refused to turn against God. Several young men presented themselves, offering to marry her, whether from lust or pity is not known. She said that to do so would be an insult to her heavenly Spouse, that she would keep her consecrated virginity intact, accept death, and see Christ.



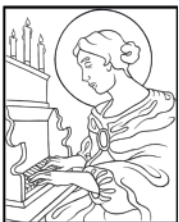
ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA - PATRON SAINT OF CATHOLIC YOUTH

Italian noble who grew up in a castle, the son of a compulsive gambler. Trained from age four as a soldier and courtier. Suffered from kidney disease which he considered a blessing as it left him bed-ridden with time for prayer. While still a boy himself, he taught catechism to poor boys. Received First Communion from Saint Charles Borromeo. At age 18 he signed away his legal claim to his family's lands and title to his brother and became a Jesuit novice. He took care of plague victims in Rome in the outbreak of 1591 and died of the disease three months later at 23.



ST. AUGUSTINE - PATRON SAINT OF PRINTERS AND THEOLOGIANS

Augustine a man of great intellect and one of the most important Church fathers, sought comfort in worldly pleasures but found no solace in them. His life is an example of how worldly distractions interfere with living a true Christian life. Augustine looked back on his life and asked: "Why did I do that? What does that tell me about my relationship with God?" The simple act of reflecting on our decisions is something to which everyone can relate. His search for truth and subsequent devotion to Christ also makes St. Augustine a saintly hero for members of the RCIA or recent converts to Catholicism.



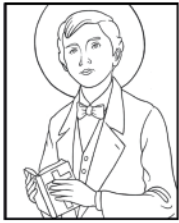
ST. CECILIA - PATRON SAINT OF MUSIC

She vowed her virginity to God, but her parents married her to Valerian of Trastevere. Cecilia told her new husband that she was accompanied by an angel, but to see it, he must be purified. He agreed to the purification, and was baptized; returning from the ceremony, he found her in prayer accompanied by a praying angel. The angel placed a crown on each of their heads and offered Valerian a favor; the new convert asked that his brother be baptized. St. Cecilia spent her time preaching and in her lifetime was able to convert over four hundred people, most of whom were baptized by Pope Urban. Cecilia was later arrested and condemned to death for being a Christian.



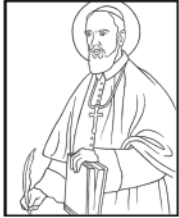
BLESSED CHIARA BADANO - PATRON SAINT OF ATHLETES

Blessed Chiara Badano, born in 1971, was a supremely ordinary teenager: she loved sports, such as tennis and swimming. She loved hiking, and she loved listening to pop music and dancing with friends. Chiara was full of fire for her faith and her love for Christ burned radiantly in her heart. At age 16, she discovered she had a rare form of bone cancer. When she entered treatment for the cancer, Chiara refused all morphine. She wanted to have a lucid mind to understand what was happening to her. Chiara embraced her sufferings as an opportunity to offer up her life more radically for Christ. For the next two years, Chiara underwent difficult chemotherapy and slowly prepared herself for death as operations failed to slow down her cancer and as she eventually lost both hope of remission and the ability to walk. Chiara offered up everything—her disappearing hair, her pain, and her sadness at leaving her parents—to Christ.



ST. DOMINIC SAVIO - PATRON SAINT OF CHOIRBOYS, FALSELY ACCUSED PEOPLE, JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

Dominic Savio (April 2, 1842-March 9, 1857) is the youngest person that the Catholic Church has ever declared to be a saint on the basis of his heroic virtue alone—that is, his exceptional goodness. Dominic's life shows that no one is ever too young to grow close to God. Dominic offered all his sufferings to Mary. When Saint John Bosco taught him that holiness involves being constantly joyful, he opened his heart to a contagious joy. Dominic died in 1857 at fourteen years of age, saying: "What a wondrous thing I am experiencing!"



ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - PATRON SAINT OF WRITERS

"Do not wish to be anything but what you are and try to be that perfectly." Born in a castle to a well-placed family, his parents intended that he become a lawyer, enter politics, and carry on the family line and power. He became a doctor in law and when he was studying, he received a message telling him to "Leave all and follow Me." He took this as a call to the priesthood, a move his family fiercely opposed. However, he pursued a devoted prayer life, and his gentle ways won over the family. Preacher, writer and spiritual director in the district of Chablais. His simple, clear explanations of Catholic doctrine, and his gentle way with everyone, brought many back to the Roman Church. Bishop of Geneva at age 35. Travelled and evangelized throughout the Duchy of Savoy, working with children whenever he could. Helped found the *Order of the Visitation* with Saint Jeanne de Chantal.



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI - PATRON SAINT OF ANIMALS, CATHOLIC ACTION

"It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching!" ~ St. Francis of Assisi. He was the son of a rich cloth merchant, a misspent youth who brawled in the street and was a some-time soldier. During an imprisonment in Perugia, he had a conversion experience, including a reported message from Christ calling him to leave this worldly life. Upon release, Francis began taking his religion seriously and founded the Franciscan Order in 1209.



ST. GEORGE - PATRON SAINT OF BOY SCOUTS

Several stories have been attached to Saint George; the best known of which is the *Golden Legend*. In it, a dragon lived in a lake near Silena, Libya. Whole armies had gone up against this fierce creature and had gone down in painful defeat. The monster ate two sheep each day; when mutton was scarce, lots were drawn in local villages, and maidens were substituted for sheep. Into this country came Saint George. Hearing the story on a day when a princess was to be eaten, he crossed himself, rode to battle against the serpent, and killed it with a single blow with his lance. George then held forth with a magnificent sermon and converted the locals. Given a large reward by the king, George distributed it to the poor, then rode away.



ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA - PATRON SAINT OF RETREATS

Wounded in the leg by a cannonball at the siege of Pampeluna on 20 May 1521, an injury that left him partially crippled for life. During his recuperation he only had access to the books: *The Golden Legend*, a collection of lives of the saints, and the *Life of Christ* by Ludolph the Carthusian. On his recovery he took a vow of chastity, hung his sword before the altar of the Virgin of Montserrat, and donned a pilgrim's robes. He journeyed to Rome and the Holy Land where he worked to convert Muslims. His meditations, prayers, visions, and insights led to forming the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits)* on 15 August 1534.



ST. ISADORE OF SEVILLA - PATRON SAINT OF INTERNET

Initially a poor student, he gave the problem over to God and became one of the most learned men of his time. He was ordained a priest, required seminaries in every diocese, and wrote a rule for religious orders. He was a prolific writer including a dictionary, an encyclopedia, a history of Goths, and a history of the world beginning with creation.



ST. JOAN OF ARC - PATRON SAINT OF FRANCE, SOLDIERS, CAPTIVES

Joan of Arc, a peasant girl living in medieval France, believed that God had chosen her to lead France to victory in its long-running war with England. With no military training, Joan convinced the embattled crown prince Charles of Valois to allow her to lead a French army to the besieged city of Orléans, where it achieved a momentous victory over the English and their French allies, the Burgundians. After seeing the prince crowned King Charles VII, Joan was captured by Anglo-Burgundian forces, tried for witchcraft and heresy, and burned at the stake in 1431, at the age of 19.



ST. JOHN BOSCO - PATRON SAINT OF YOUNG WORKERS

"All for God and for His Glory. In whatever you do, think of the Glory of God as your main goal." Bosco would go to circuses, fairs, and carnivals, practice the tricks he saw magicians perform, and then present one-boy shows. After his performance, while he still had an audience of boys, he would repeat the homily he had heard earlier in church. He was a teacher and worked with youth, finding places where they could meet, play, and pray, teaching catechism to orphans and apprentices. He was a chaplain in a hospice for girls, wrote short treatises aimed at explaining the faith to children, and then taught children how to print them. Founded the *Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB)* in 1859, priests who work with and educate boys.



ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE - PATRON SAINT OF FRIENDSHIP

John was a fisherman and brother of Saint James the Great. He was called one of the *Sons of Thunder*. He was a disciple of Saint John the Baptist and friend of Saint Peter the Apostle. Jesus called him during the first year of His ministry and traveled everywhere with Him, becoming so close as to be known as *the beloved disciple*. He took part in the Last Supper, the only one of the Twelve not to forsake the Savior in the hour of His Passion, standing at the foot of the cross.



ST. JOSEPH - PATRON SAINT OF FAMILIES, UNIVERSAL CHURCH, UNBORN CHILDREN, FATHERS, WORKERS

Despite his humble work and means, Joseph came from a royal lineage, a descendant of the house of David. He was a layman and a carpenter. He was the earthly spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and foster and adoptive father of Jesus Christ. Joseph was a visionary who was visited by angels. Noted for his willingness to immediately get up and do what God told him.



ST. KATERI TEKAKWITHA - PATRON SAINT OF NATIVE AMERICAN AND FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES, ECOLOGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

St. Kateri Tekakwitha is the first Native American to be recognized as a saint by the Catholic Church. She was born in 1656. She contracted smallpox as a four-year-old child which scarred her skin. The scars were a source of humiliation in her youth. She was commonly seen wearing a blanket to hide her face. Worse, her entire family died of smallpox during the outbreak. Kateri Tekakwitha was subsequently raised by her uncle, who was the chief of a Mohawk clan. At age 19, Kateri Tekakwitha converted to Catholicism, taking a vow of chastity and pledging to marry only Jesus Christ. Her decision was very unpopular with her adoptive parents and their neighbors. Some of her neighbors started rumors of sorcery. To avoid persecution, she traveled to a Christian native community south of Montreal. Sadly, just five years after her conversion to Catholicism, she became ill and passed away at age 24, on April 17, 1680.



ST. JOHN PAUL II - PATRON SAINT OF CATHOLIC FAMILIES

Born in Wadowice, Poland, Karol Jozef Wojtyla had lost his mother, father, and older brother before his 21st birthday. Karol's promising academic career at Krakow's Jagiellonian University was cut short by the outbreak of World War II. While working in a quarry and a chemical factory, he enrolled in an "underground" seminary in Krakow. He was ordained in 1946. He revolutionized the way young people responded not only to their faith as Catholics from all walks of life and cultures but how they responded to the Papacy. He initiated World Youth Day throughout the world to reach out to Catholic youth and today this youth conference lives on, with millions of young Catholics in attendance from all over the world. St. Pope John Paul II loved young people and left us all with his amazing theology and philosophical principles on the dignity of the human person. His work will influence and challenge the young to seek out their own holiness and relationship with Christ.



ST. MARTIN DE PORRES - PATRON SAINT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Illegitimate son of a Spanish nobleman and a young freed black slave, he grew up in poverty. Spent part of his youth with a surgeon-barber from whom he learned some medicine and care of the sick. At age 11 he became a servant in the Dominican priory. He begged more than \$2,000 a week from the rich to support the poor and sick of Lima, Peru. He was placed in charge of the Dominican's infirmary; known for his tender care of the sick and for his miraculous cures. His superiors dropped the stipulation that "no black person may be received to the holy habit or profession of our order" and Martin took vows as a Dominican brother.



BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI - PATRON SAINT OF YOUNG ADULTS

Though he is not canonized yet, Blessed Pier Giorgio is a powerful intercessor. Born on April 6, 1901, he was an indifferent student known for being devout. He was involved in social organizing along with various Catholic youth organizations. He was a member of Catholic Action and Apostleship of Prayer. Social reform was the mantra of this boy who became a third order Dominican. He saw many parallels between Catholic life and his favorite pastime, mountain-climbing. He would regularly organize trips into the mountains with his close friends with occasions for prayer, liturgies, and conversations about faith on the way up to or down from the summit.



ST. RAPHAEL - PATRON SAINT OF TRAVELERS, HAPPY MEETINGS, PHYSICIANS, NURSES, AND CATHOLIC STUDIES

St. Raphael is one of the seven Archangels who stand before the throne of the Lord, and one of the only three mentioned by name in the Bible. He appears, by name, only in the Book of Tobit. Raphael's name means "God heals." This identity came about because of the biblical story that claims he "healed" the earth when it was defiled by the sins of the fallen angels. Raphael is credited with driving the evil spirit from Sarah and restoring Tobit's vision, allowing him to see the light of Heaven and for receiving all good things through his intercession.



ST. SEBASTIAN - PATRON SAINT OF ATHLETES

In the third century, Saint Sebastian was a young captain of the Praetorian Guard. It is said that he spoke constantly of Christ and tried to convert his companions, to the point that he was ordered to renounce his faith. Since he refused, he was shot with arrows, yet he survived and continued to proclaim Christ fearlessly.



ST. TARCISIUS - PATRON SAINT OF ALTAR SERVERS

A tradition dating from the sixth century says that St. Tarcisus was an acolyte (altar server) whose fidelity and courage so impressed the leaders of the Church during the persecution of Valerian that he was entrusted with taking the Blessed Sacrament secretly to the Christians who awaited martyrdom in prison. Pagans met him carrying the hidden sacrament of the Body of Christ and asked him what it was he was carrying. In his protection of the Blessed Sacrament, he was assaulted by them for a long time with clubs and stones until he died. When they turned over his body, the sacrilegious assailants could find no trace of Christ's Sacrament either in his hands or in his clothing. The Christians took up the body of the martyr and buried it with honor in the cemetery of Callistus.



ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX - PATRON SAINT OF FLORISTS, FOREIGN MISSIONS, LOSS OF PARENTS, PRIESTS, AND THE SICK

Born in 1873, Therese, at fifteen years of age, having overcome many difficulties, succeeded in entering the Carmelite convent. Thérèse lived the little way of complete trust in the Lord's love and determined to fan with her prayers the fire of love burning in the heart of the Church. She made herself small so that Jesus could carry her to perfection. She did little things every day and found holiness in her ordinary life. She also would fall asleep in prayer but thought that mothers delight in their child sleeping in their arms, so God must love her when she slept in prayer.



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS - PATRON SAINT OF ACADEMICS

When Thomas was just five, his parents sent him to study with the Benedictine monks. His parents had hoped from the time he was born that Thomas would become a Benedictine monk like his uncle, who was the local abbot. But Thomas was drawn to the religious order founded by St. Dominic, the Dominicans. His parents tried to keep him from joining this religious order as they were a new order and seen as poor. Eventually, Thomas was sent to Paris and then to Cologne to study and to teach. He was an inspired writer of philosophy and theology. He wrote more than 60 works, some of which are still popular and used today. Popes consulted with him, too. One pope wanted to appoint him Archbishop of Naples, but Thomas wanted to have time instead to write and spread the truth about the faith. Thomas believed that both faith and reason are required to reach the truth, and both come from God. He also said that some truths can only be revealed through faith. Today we refer to his thought as "Thomism."