

K-Ch 17

# Called to Be Saints

The word saint is derived from the Latin word sanctus, meaning holy. In the New Testament the description of saint is applied to those who have been baptized (see Acts of the Apostles 9:32, Romans 1:7, and Galatians 1:1). While all the faithful are called to be saints—to live holy lives—the Church also speaks of saints in a special way. These are the members of the Communion of Saints whom the Church has officially recognized as living with God in Heaven. Popular devotion to saints began in the early centuries of the Church. There is evidence that in the third century the saints were considered intercessors before God. By the tenth century a formal papal procedure for naming, or canonizing, saints was put into practice. In Catholic teaching God alone is to be worshiped, but the saints are worthy of our veneration. The saints are our companions in prayer, intercessors for us, models of faith to emulate, patrons for those who are named in their honor, and protectors of places and of people engaged in specific activities.

The saints in Heaven share in the glory of Christ. We believe with confidence that we are in communion with these holy men and women through our communion with Christ in the Spirit.

**More Background:** For further reading and reflection see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraphs 954-962.

## For Reflection

- What saints' lives have been an inspiration to me?
- In what ways do the actions and words of these saints guide me in living a holy life?

## First Thoughts



### SR. MARIE:

Sometimes the thought of being a saint seems so impossible to us. But we are called to be saints. In fact, the faithful followers of Christ are called saints in the New Testament letters. How can we be saints? Jesus commanded us to love God and other people with intention and dedication. There are many ways to show that love. Each day presents many opportunities.



### JANICE:

Kindergarten children show excitement and anticipation at the thought of being with their friends. Tell the children that just as they have friends, Jesus had friends too. When Jesus lived on Earth, some of his closest friends were called Apostles. We call all the faithful friends and followers of Jesus, both those living on Earth and those in Heaven, saints.

## Faith Focus

The Saints live in Heaven with God. They help us live as children of God.

## Materials needed

- Pencils
- Crayons or markers
- Optional**
  - Statue or pictures of Mary
  - Paper cross per child

## Objectives of the chapter

After completing the chapter, the children should be able to:

- Define *saints* as those holy people who live with God in Heaven.
- Explain that Mary is the greatest Saint.
- Discover that the Saints show us ways to love God and live as friends of Jesus.
- Understand that the Saints help us live as children of God.
- Celebrate and pray to the Saints.

## Enriching the chapter

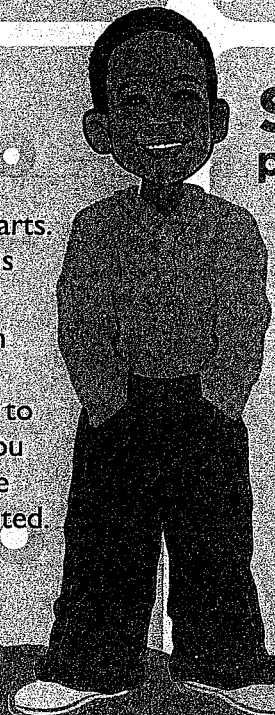
- **Faith First Kindergarten Additional Activities Book**, pages 17 and 17a
- **Faith First Kindergarten-Primary Music CD and Music and Prayer Celebrations Book**, Song 9, "Blessed Saints, Please Pray for Me"
- **Faith First Kindergarten Family Resource Book**, pages 17 and 17a
- **www.FaithFirst.com**
- **Books to read**
  - Lives and Legends of the Saints* by Carole Armstrong (Frances Lincoln Limited, 2000)
  - Nana Upstairs & Nana Downstairs* by Tomie dePaola (Putnam Pub. Group Juv., 1998)
  - Patrick: Patron Saint of Ireland* by Tomie dePaola (Holiday House, 1992)

## Parish program notes

- Each lesson plan is divided into five parts. The fifth part is a celebration, which is found only in the guide.
- The highlighted portions of the lesson plan will help you teach the main objectives of the chapter in forty-five to sixty minutes. As your time allows, you may choose to use the sections of the lesson plan that have not been highlighted.

## School program notes

- Each lesson plan is divided into five parts. The fifth part is a celebration, which is found only in the guide.
- The lesson plan for the chapter can be adapted to three, four, or five fifteen- to twenty-minute sessions.



The lesson plan for this chapter begins on page 209. Tell the story when indicated.

## Special Friends of Jesus

wonderful weekend it had been! Anita was visiting her grandmother Nana in the city. On Saturday Nana gave Anita's favorite cinnamon rolls for breakfast. Then they visited Mrs. Butler, Nana's friend, and went shopping for groceries.

On a very busy and fun day, Nana told Anita at bedtime that they would go on an adventure the next morning. They would go to the Cathedral of Saint Francis of Assisi, the place where Nana was baptized.

What a church it was! It was a *big*, a *big* church, with tall, tall ceilings and colorful stained-glass windows, sparkling with a rainbow of colors as the bright sunlight shined through them. And although the cathedral there were large statues of men and women.

"Where are all these people?" asked Anita, pointing to the statues. "That's a statue of the Mother of Jesus. And that's Saint Joseph," answered Nana, pointing to the statues closest to them. "The Saints are members of

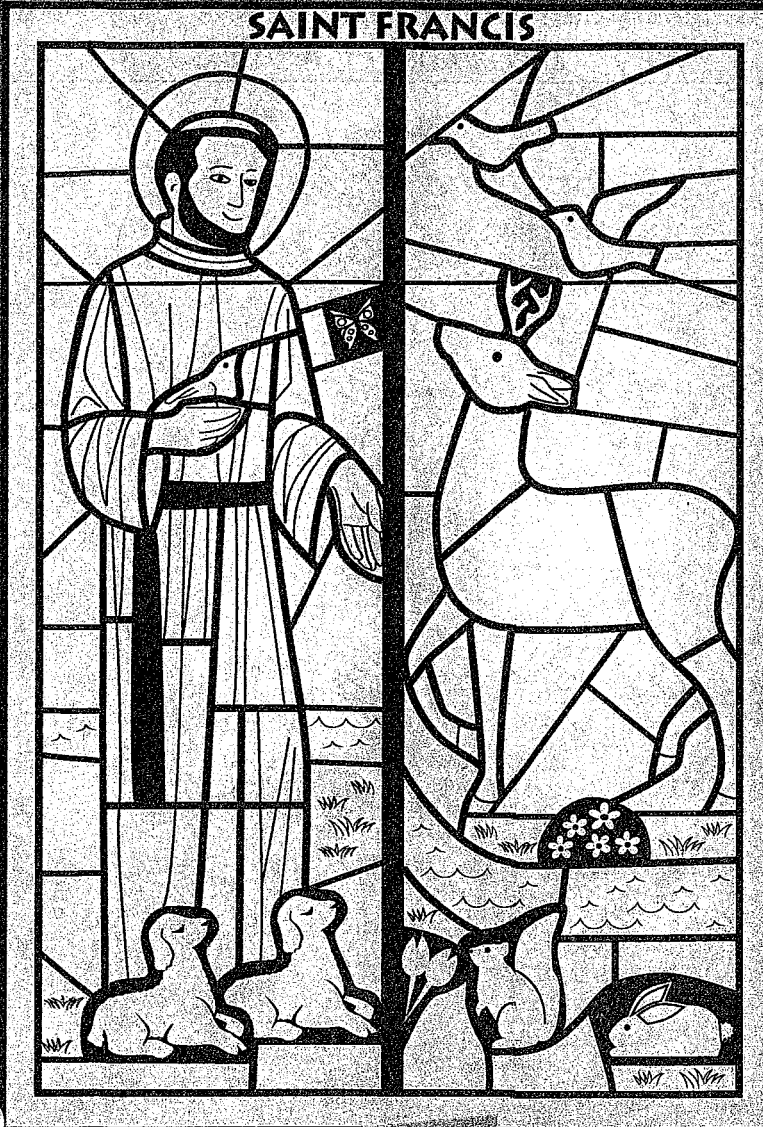


our Church family who lived a long time ago and now live with Jesus in Heaven."

Nana took Anita by her hand and walked from one statue to the next, stopping at each statue to tell Anita some little story about that Saint. When she finished telling her last story, Nana said, "Anita, these are just a few of the Saints. There are many, many more."

As they were leaving the cathedral, Anita stopped at the large wooden doors. Looking back, she said, "Nana, maybe someday you'll have your statue here."

Color the stained-glass window.



SAINT FRANCIS

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FROM: SR. MARIE

## Stained-Glass Windows

Stained-glass windows became important in churches during the Middle Ages (A.D. 500-1500) for two reasons. First, churches depended upon natural light since there was no electricity. Stained-glass windows are a source of brilliant light. The bubbles, flaws, and irregularities of stained glass diffuse the light and make the glass sparkle. Second, in the Middle Ages many people could not read. The pictures in the windows provided and still provide a colorful means of passing on the story of our faith from generation to generation.

A NOTE FROM: JANICE

## The Cathedral

The cathedral is the main church of a diocese or archdiocese and is the official church of the bishop. The name *cathedral* comes from the Latin word *cathedra*, meaning "chair" and refers to the chair where the bishop presides at the liturgy and exercises his priestly authority. Cathedrals are usually in a central location in the diocese and are often known for their size and beauty.

## Teach

### OBJECTIVE

Explain that those who live with God in Heaven are called Saints.

### INTRODUCE

- Ask the children: Who has been to a church other than your own parish church? Invite volunteers to describe what they saw in the churches.
- Have the children look at the picture on page 105. Tell the children that you are going to tell them a story about a girl who visited the church in which her grandmother Nana was baptized.

### TELL THE STORY

Tell the story "Special Friends of Jesus" to the children.

## Apply

### INTEGRATE

- Review the main ideas of the story with the children. Make sure they understand what a Saint is. Explain the meaning of the term *cathedral*.
- Ask the children to talk about any stained-glass windows that they might have seen. If the children are not familiar with stained-glass windows, you may want to explain what they are.
- Tell the children that the Saint in the picture of the stained-glass window is Saint Francis of Assisi. The cathedral in the story was named for Saint Francis of Assisi.
- Allow time for the children to color the stained-glass window.

# Teach

## OBJECTIVE

Mary is the greatest Saint.

## DISCOVER

Have children to look at the picture of Mary on page 107. Ask them to talk about what they already know about Mary. Read the text on page 107 aloud to them.

Explain that the Saints are special friends of God. They live with God in heaven. Emphasize that Mary is the greatest Saint.

Have children listen to the Bible story of the Annunciation found in Luke 1:26-38. If possible, read them a children's version of the story.

Explain this important point of the Annunciation—that Mary loved and listened to God.

## EXPAND

Have children to sing these verses to the tune of "Michael, Row Your Boat Ashore."

"Hail to you, Mary,"  
"The angel said."

"God has chosen you to be  
the mother of his Son."

"You said yes to God,  
and I trust you."

"I will be my son,  
and you love him."

Repeat Verse 2 and vary the line:

"I care for him."

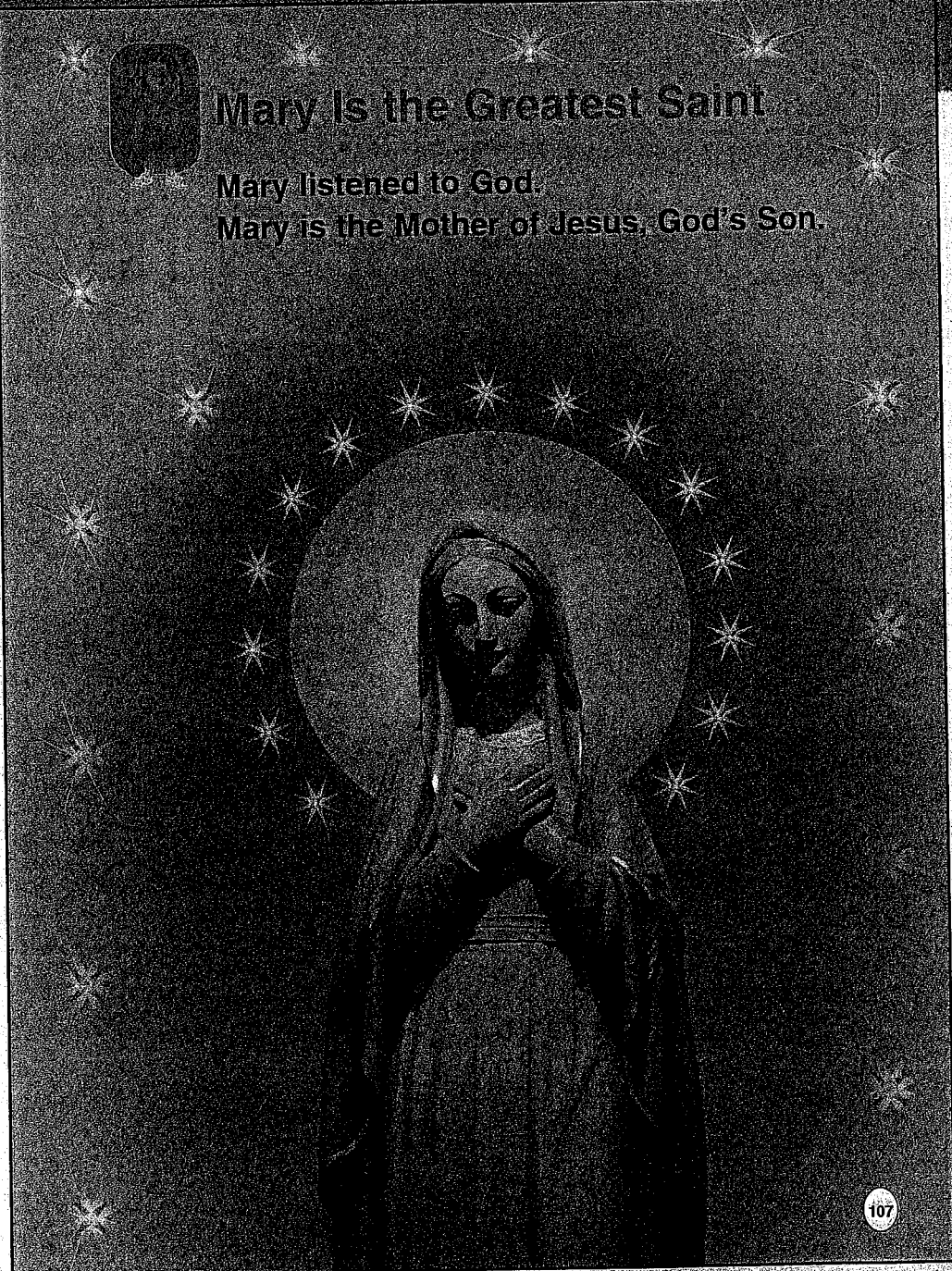
"I play with him."

"I teach him."

# Mary Is the Greatest Saint

Mary listened to God.

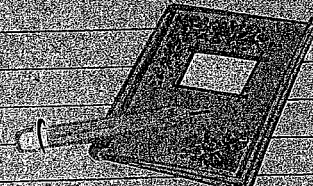
Mary is the Mother of Jesus, God's Son.



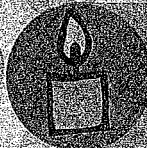
## Bright Ideas

### Delivering a Message

Saints are special friends of God. Have the children decorate a bookmark to remind them that they too are special friends of God. Give each child a bookmark with words such as "God loves you" or "You are special" or "You are a special friend of Jesus" printed on it. Have the children decorate their bookmarks and take them home and give them to someone in their family.



Color the picture of Mary.



Holy Mary,  
Mother of God,  
pray for us.



## Apply

### INTEGRATE

- Recall with the children the details of the Bible story of the Annunciation. God chose Mary to be the Mother of God's Son, Jesus. Mary loved God. Mary listened to God.
- Ask the children: Who has seen a picture or statue of Mary? Invite volunteers to tell you where they saw the pictures or statues. If possible, bring in a statue or some pictures or other artwork of Mary to show the children.
- Tell the children that we use statues of Mary to remind us of Mary and her great love for God and for us.
- Invite the children to color and decorate the picture of Mary.
- Pray the prayer from the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is at the bottom of page 108.

#### NOTE FROM: SR. MARIE

### Mary, Our Mother

We honor Mary as the greatest saint. Christian girls are often given the name Mary at birth. Thousands of churches are dedicated to her. Popular devotions to Mary span the centuries. Her exceptional faith will always inspire us. She is the Mother of God. Ask yourself: How does Mary help me trust in God's love?

#### A NOTE FROM: JANICE

### Devotions to Mary

For centuries the Church has had special devotion to Mary. This has been expressed in many popular devotions and customs that have been celebrated for years. Place a statue or picture of Mary in a prominent place in your classroom. Encourage the children to honor Mary by bringing in flowers to place around the statue or picture. Kindergarten children love to honor their mothers with flowers. Encourage them to practice honoring Mary too.

# Teach

## OBJECTIVE

that the Saints show us ways God and live as friends of Jesus.

## DISCOVER

and the children that Mary is the greatest Saint. She gave us an example of how to love God and the children of God.

and the children that there are many Saints.

and the children to look at the pictures of the three Saints on page 109. Have the children point to a picture of each Saint as you read the text about that Saint.

and the children about the Saints named on page 109. Use the information found in "Bright Ideas" pages 212 and 213 of this guide to help you.

# Apply

## INTEGRATE

and the children to tell one thing they learned about each of the Saints pictured on page 109.

and the children to tell about the Saints when they have helped someone.

and the children to role-play situations that show ways they can help as children of God as the Saints named on page 109 such as making and sending Christmas cards, calling someone to help them up when they are sick, or giving a favorite toy to the poor.



## The Saints Help Us

Saint Elizabeth taught children about Jesus. Saint Martin took care of the sick. Saint Katharine helped the poor.



SAINT ELIZABETH



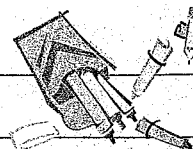
SAINT MARTIN



SAINT KATHARINE

We are called to be saints.  
Based on 1 Corinthians 1:2

109



## Bright Ideas

### Saints of the Americas

Take the time to tell the children something about the lives of the Saints who are pictured on page 109.

Saint Katharine Drexel was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1858. From age thirty-three until her death in 1955, she dedicated her life and fortune to the well-being of African Americans and Native Americans in the United States. Several schools were opened under her direction, including Xavier University in New Orleans. In 2000 Katharine Drexel was canonized by Blessed Pope John Paul II. Today, members of the religious community founded by Katharine Drexel continue the work she began.

## I Can Be a Saint

Color the   
Show how you can live as a Saint.



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*Saint Martin de Porres was born in Lima, Peru, in 1579. At age fifteen, Martin entered the Dominican Order at Lima. Martin worked as a barber and a farm laborer among other things. He also took care of the sick. Martin's love for God was shown in the gentle and loving way he treated both people and animals. Martin de Porres died in 1639 and was canonized in 1962.*

*Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton was born in New York City on August 28, 1774. She was married and a mother of five children. After the death of her husband, she became a Catholic. Elizabeth opened a Catholic school in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and founded a religious order, the Sisters of Charity, in 1809. Elizabeth Seton died in 1821. In 1975 she became the first native-born American to be canonized.*

## Teach

### OBJECTIVE

Encourage the children to live as children of God.

### DISCOVER

- Recall some of the good things the Saints named on page 109 did to show their love for God.
- Talk with the children about some of the ways we honor the Saints.
- Explain that one way we honor the Saints is by praying to them. We ask the Saints to help us live as children of God.

## Apply

### INTEGRATE

- Have the children look at the three photos on page 110. Describe the ways that the people in the pictures are living as children of God as the Saints did.
- Invite the children to color the cross next to the pictures that show something they can do to live as children of God.
- Help the children understand that trying to live our best as friends of Jesus and children of God is what it means to be a Saint.



# Celebration

## OBJECTIVE

celebrate and pray to the Saints.

## GETTING READY

Ask the children about the Saints. Tell them that some people have a favorite Saint. Sometimes a person is named after a Saint. Give some examples of Saints' names. If possible, use the names of the children as examples.

When time permits, give each child a cross made from construction paper or tagboard. Help each child choose the name of a Saint and print that name from left to right across the horizontal crossbar. Have the children color and decorate their crosses.

Punch a hole in the top of each cross. Pull strings of yarn through the holes and tie them. Have the children wear their crosses.

Review the words to the **Faith First** song: "Blessed Saints, Please Pray for Me" or to another appropriate song with the children.

## AND NOW WE PRAY

Play the instrumental version of the **Faith First** song as you gather the children for prayer.

Help the children focus on the prayer celebration.

When the children are ready, lead them in praying the Litany of the Saints. Invite the children to respond "pray for us" after the name of each Saint is said.

Begin by praying for the Saints that were mentioned in this chapter:

Holy Mary, Mother of God,

Saint Francis,

Saint Katharine,

Saint Martin,

Saint Elizabeth,

Continue by inviting the children to stand one at a time and read the name of the Saint that is printed on their cross. Have all the children respond "pray for us" as the name of each Saint is said aloud.

After all the children have said their Saint's name, pray: "All you Saints," and have the children respond "pray for us."

Conclude by singing the song.



## Blessed Saints, Please Pray for Me

Chorus:

**Blessed Saints, please pray for me  
in your gentle way.**

**Help me learn how I should be.**

**Watch over me,  
watch over me, each day.**

Verse 1:

**The Saints are special friends of God,  
who went before us all.**

**They live in Heaven, pray for us,  
and hear us when we call.**

Repeat chorus

Verse 2:

**Mary is the Saint most blest,  
greater than the others.**

**Honored over all the rest,  
for she is Jesus' mother.**

Repeat chorus