

SAINTS – WEEK 1 - ST. STEPHEN

STORY

1. Stephen lived in the early days of the Church after Jesus' resurrection and ascension. As the number of believers grew in Jerusalem, the apostles appointed seven men to help serve the community. Stephen was chosen because he was known to be full of faith and the Holy Spirit.
2. Stephen did not only serve tables. Scripture says he performed great wonders and signs among the people. He spoke boldly about Jesus as the promised Messiah. Some religious leaders opposed him and began to argue with him, but they could not resist the wisdom and Spirit by which he spoke.
3. False witnesses accused Stephen of speaking against the temple and the law. He was brought before the council to defend himself. Rather than responding in fear, Stephen boldly recounted the history of Israel, showing how God had always been faithful — and how the people had often resisted Him.
4. Stephen's words were strong and direct. He declared that Jesus, whom they had rejected, was the Righteous One. His message angered the council.
5. As they dragged him outside the city, they began to stone him. Yet in this moment of suffering, Stephen did something remarkable. He looked up and saw a vision of Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Instead of responding with hatred, Stephen prayed. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." "Lord, do not charge them with this sin."
6. Stephen became the first Christian martyr. His death was not a defeat. It was a testimony. Among those present was a young man named Saul, who would later become the Apostle Paul.
7. Stephen's life teaches that bold witness and forgiving love reflect Christ Himself.

SAINTS – WEEK 2 - ST. ALBAN

STORY

1. Alban lived in Britain during the third or early fourth century, at a time when Christians were persecuted by Roman authorities. He was not originally a Christian. Alban was a Roman citizen who encountered a Christian priest fleeing persecution.
2. Alban offered the priest shelter in his home. During the time they spent together, Alban listened carefully to the priest's teaching. He learned about Jesus Christ — about His death and resurrection, and about the promise of eternal life. Alban's heart was changed.
3. When Roman soldiers came searching for the priest, Alban made a courageous decision. He exchanged clothing with the priest and allowed himself to be arrested in the priest's place. By doing this, he gave the priest time to escape.
4. Brought before a Roman judge, Alban was ordered to renounce Christ and offer sacrifice to pagan gods. He refused. He confessed his faith openly.
5. Alban endured punishment and was eventually sentenced to death. According to tradition, he was executed on a hill outside the town that would later bear his name — St. Albans.
6. Alban is remembered as the first British martyr. His sacrifice was not motivated by anger, but by love — love for Christ and love for another believer.
7. His life reminds us that faith may require sacrifice, and that courage is rooted in devotion to Christ.

SAINTS – WEEK 3 - ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY

STORY

1. Augustine was a monk living in Rome in the sixth century. During this time, much of England had returned to pagan practices after earlier Roman influence had faded. Pope Gregory the Great desired to send missionaries to bring the Gospel to the Anglo-Saxon people.
2. Gregory chose Augustine to lead this mission. Augustine and several monks traveled from Rome to the kingdom of Kent in England. The journey was long and uncertain. At one point, the group became discouraged and considered turning back. Gregory encouraged them to continue.
3. When Augustine arrived in Kent around the year 597, he met King Æthelberht. The king's wife, Queen Bertha, was already a Christian, which helped open the door for conversation. Augustine approached carefully and respectfully, preaching Christ without force.
4. Over time, many people in Kent embraced the Christian faith. King Æthelberht himself was baptized. Augustine established a church in Canterbury, which became the center of the English Church.
5. Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury. He organized bishops, encouraged the building of churches, and worked to establish Christian teaching among the people.
6. Augustine's mission was not easy. He faced cultural differences, language barriers, and uncertainty. Yet he remained faithful to the call to preach Christ.
7. His life reminds us that evangelism is not about power or control. It is about patient witness and trust in the Holy Spirit to change hearts.

SAINTS – WEEK 4 - ST. COLUMBA OF IONA

STORY

1. Columba was born in Ireland around the year 521 into a noble family. He was educated in Christian teaching and became a monk and later a priest. Columba was intelligent, passionate, and deeply devoted to Scripture.
2. However, early in his life, Columba became involved in a serious conflict. A dispute over a copied manuscript led to tension between clans. The conflict escalated into violence, and lives were lost. Though history records the details differently, Columba believed he bore responsibility for the consequences.
3. Columba chose repentance. As an act of penance and humility, he left Ireland and sailed to Scotland with a small group of companions. They settled on the island of Iona in 563. There, they established a monastery dedicated to prayer, study, and mission.
4. From Iona, Columba and his companions traveled to the Pictish tribes of northern Scotland. He preached the Gospel, baptized converts, and established churches. His life became a testimony not of pride, but of transformed purpose.
5. Columba's mission flowed from repentance. He did not deny his past; he entrusted it to God. Iona became a center of Christian learning and evangelism, influencing Scotland and beyond.
6. Columba reminds us that God can redeem failure. Repentance leads to restoration. Mission grows from humility.

SAINTS – WEEK 5 - ST. AIDAN OF LINDISFARNE

STORY

1. Aidan was a monk from the monastery of Iona in the seventh century. After the mission of Columba had taken root in parts of Scotland, King Oswald of Northumbria asked for help in teaching the Christian faith to his people in northern England.
2. At first, another monk was sent, but he returned discouraged. He said the people were too stubborn and difficult. Aidan gently responded that perhaps the problem was not the people, but the approach. He suggested that teaching must begin patiently and with kindness.
3. Aidan was then sent to Northumbria around the year 635. He established a monastery on the island of Lindisfarne, sometimes called Holy Island. From there, he traveled on foot through villages and countryside, speaking with people personally and explaining the Christian faith in simple language.
4. King Oswald sometimes acted as interpreter, translating Aidan's words for the people. Aidan did not rely on force or authority. He relied on teaching, example, and compassion.
5. He was known for giving generously to the poor. If he received gifts from the king, he often passed them on to those in need. He trained young people carefully in Scripture and encouraged humility in leadership.
6. Aidan's method of evangelism was relational and pastoral. He walked among the people. He listened before speaking. He lived what he taught.
7. Aidan reminds us that gentleness is not weakness. It is strength guided by love. Faith grows best in patient soil.

SAINTS – WEEK 6 - ST. PATRICK OF IRELAND

STORY

1. Patrick was born around the year 385 in Roman Britain. His father served as a deacon, and his grandfather as a priest. Although he grew up in a Christian home, Patrick later admitted that in his youth, he did not truly know God. He understood the language of faith, but his heart had not yet been shaped by it.
2. When Patrick was about sixteen years old, Irish raiders attacked his village. He was captured and taken across the sea to Ireland, where he was sold into slavery. He was forced to work as a shepherd, spending long days and nights in open fields through cold and rain. He was alone, far from family, and without comfort.
3. During this time, Patrick began to pray. In his own writings, he said he prayed many times each day and even through the night. What began as fear slowly became faith. The fields that once felt like punishment became the place where his relationship with God deepened. In hardship, Patrick discovered that God was near.
4. After six years, Patrick believed God guided him through a dream telling him that a ship was ready. He escaped and traveled many miles to the coast. He found passage and returned home to Britain. His family rejoiced at his return.
5. Yet Patrick later experienced another calling. In a dream, he heard the voices of the Irish people asking him to return. This was the land of his suffering. Instead of choosing safety or bitterness, Patrick chose forgiveness and obedience. He trained for ministry and returned to Ireland as a missionary bishop.
6. Patrick preached Christ boldly. He baptized believers, planted churches, and taught faith. Tradition tells us that he used a shamrock to help explain the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — one God in three Persons. While no symbol perfectly explains God's nature, the shamrock became a helpful teaching reminder.
7. Patrick's life shows that God redeems suffering. Captivity became a calling. Hardship became a mission. Forgiveness became witness. Patrick returned not out of revenge, but because Christ had shown mercy to him.

SAINTS – WEEK 7 – ST. BENEDICT OF NURSIA

STORY

1. Benedict was born around the year 480 in Italy during a time of great instability in the Roman world. As a young man, he was sent to Rome for education. There, he observed moral confusion and disorder. Rather than follow the patterns he saw, Benedict sought a life devoted to God.
2. He withdrew to live in solitude for a time, dedicating himself to prayer and discipline. His desire was not escape from the world, but deeper faithfulness to God. Others soon recognized his wisdom and sought his guidance.
3. Eventually, Benedict founded a monastery at Monte Cassino. There he wrote what became known as the Rule of St. Benedict — a guide for Christian community life. The Rule emphasized balance: prayer, work, Scripture reading, humility, obedience, and stability.
4. Benedict understood that holiness grows through daily faithfulness. He taught that monks should live under obedience, rise for prayer, work diligently, and treat one another with respect.
5. His motto is often summarized as “Ora et Labora” — Pray and Work.
6. Benedict’s Rule shaped Christian monastic life across Europe for centuries. Yet the heart of his teaching is simple and applicable for all believers: order your life around Christ.
7. Benedict reminds us that spiritual growth requires discipline. Prayer is not occasional. It is woven into daily life.

SAINTS – WEEK 8 - ST. GEORGE

STORY

1. George was born in the third century into a Christian family in the region of Cappadocia. As a young man, he joined the Roman army. He was known for courage and discipline, and he rose through the ranks as a respected soldier.
2. During this time, the Roman Empire was not always friendly toward Christians. At times, believers were pressured to deny Christ and offer sacrifice to the emperor. Loyalty to Rome sometimes meant denying faith in Jesus.
3. When persecution increased under Emperor Diocletian, soldiers were ordered to participate in pagan sacrifices. George faced a choice. He could protect his position and safety by remaining silent, or he could confess his faith openly. George chose faithfulness.
4. He declared that he was a Christian and would not deny Christ. As a result of this confession, he was arrested. He endured imprisonment and suffering. Yet he remained steadfast. He refused to renounce Jesus.
5. According to early accounts, George was eventually executed for his faith around the year 303. His courage made a deep impression on Christians throughout the Church.
6. Over time, stories and legends grew around his name — including the well-known story of George and the dragon. While the dragon story is symbolic, it reflects an important spiritual truth: the Christian life is a battle against evil, and Christ gives victory.
7. The historical George was not a dragonslayer. He was something greater — a faithful witness. He stood firm in faith when it cost him everything.
8. George's life reminds us that courage is not loud or dramatic. Courage is remaining faithful to Christ, even when it is difficult.

SAINTS – WEEK 9 - ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

STORY

1. Francis was born in 1181 in Assisi, Italy, to a wealthy merchant family. As a young man, he enjoyed comfort, fine clothing, and popularity. He dreamed of becoming a knight and gaining honor.
2. After illness and disappointment in battle, Francis began to question his priorities. While praying in a small, broken-down church, he believed he heard Christ calling him to “rebuild My church.”
3. At first, Francis took this literally. He began repairing damaged church buildings. Over time, he understood that God was calling him to renew hearts, not just walls.
4. Francis chose to give up his wealth and embrace a life of simplicity and poverty. He wore plain clothing, served the poor, and preached repentance. His joy did not depend on possessions. It flowed from devotion to Christ.
5. Others were drawn to his example. A community formed around him, later known as the Franciscans. They traveled, preached, and served with humility.
6. Francis is also remembered for his love of creation. He saw the natural world as a reflection of God’s goodness. He called the sun and moon “brother” and “sister,” recognizing that all creation belongs to the Lord.
7. Francis did not worship nature. He worshiped the Creator. His simplicity allowed him to delight in God’s gifts without clinging to them. Francis reminds us that true treasure is not wealth or status, but Christ Himself.

SAINTS – WEEK 10 - ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND

STORY

1. Margaret was born around the year 1045 into an English royal family. Political unrest forced her family to flee, and after a shipwreck, they landed in Scotland. There, she eventually married King Malcolm III.
2. Though she became queen, Margaret did not use her position for comfort or power. She used it for service.
3. Margaret was deeply devoted to prayer and Scripture. She worked to strengthen the Church in Scotland, encouraging reforms in worship practices and discipline. She supported monasteries, cared for clergy, and encouraged regular observance of Christian feasts.
4. Yet Margaret's most remembered quality is her charity. She personally cared for the poor, inviting orphans and needy families into the royal court to feed them. She washed the feet of the poor and gave generously from her own resources. She taught her children to pray and to serve others.
5. Margaret believed that leadership must reflect Christ's compassion. Her influence shaped both her family and her kingdom.
6. Despite political conflict and personal suffering, Margaret remained steadfast in faith. She died in 1093, shortly after learning of her husband's death in battle.
7. Margaret's life reminds us that Christian leadership is measured by mercy, humility, and faithful devotion to God.

SAINTS – WEEK 11 - ST. JOSEPH

STORY

1. Joseph lived in Nazareth and worked as a carpenter. Though he descended from the royal line of King David, his life was simple and humble. He was engaged to Mary when he learned something that deeply troubled him — Mary was expecting a child.
2. Joseph knew he was not the father. According to the law and custom of his time, he had the right to expose her publicly. Yet Scripture describes Joseph as a just man. His first instinct was mercy, not anger. He chose humility over pride. He planned to protect Mary quietly rather than shame her.
3. Before Joseph acted, an angel appeared to him in a dream. The angel told him not to fear. The child was conceived by the Holy Spirit and would be called Jesus, for He would save His people from their sins.
4. Joseph faced a courageous decision. Accepting Mary meant accepting misunderstanding and risk. It meant trusting God's word over his own understanding. Joseph obeyed.
5. He took Mary as his wife. He named the child Jesus. He embraced a calling he did not fully understand.
6. Later, after Jesus was born, Joseph received another warning in a dream: King Herod sought the child's life. Again, Joseph acted immediately. He rose during the night and fled to Egypt with Mary and the infant Jesus. He did not hesitate. He trusted.
7. Joseph's life is marked by quiet courage. He did not preach sermons or perform miracles. He protected his family. He worked faithfully. He listened carefully to God's guidance. His humility made room for God's greater plan.
8. Joseph reminds us that courage is not always loud. Sometimes courage looks like obedience when no one sees.

SAINTS – WEEK 12 - ST. MARY, THE MOTHER OF OUR LORD

STORY

1. Mary lived in the small town of Nazareth in Galilee. She was young, likely a teenager, and engaged to be married to Joseph. Her life would have appeared ordinary and quiet.
2. One day, the angel Gabriel came to her with astonishing news. She had found favor with God. She would conceive and bear a Son, and His name would be Jesus. He would be called the Son of the Highest and would reign forever.
3. Mary was troubled and confused. She asked how this could happen, since she was not yet married. Gabriel explained that the Holy Spirit would come upon her, and that the child would be holy — the Son of God.
4. Mary faced an enormous decision. Accepting this calling would bring misunderstanding and risk. In her culture, an unexpected pregnancy could bring shame. Yet Mary did not respond with fear or refusal. She answered, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.”
5. Mary’s obedience was not passive. It was courageous trust. Later, Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, who rejoiced at her arrival. In response, Mary sang what we call the Magnificat — a song of praise declaring that God lifts the humble and keeps His promises.
6. Mary gave birth to Jesus in Bethlehem. She witnessed His growth, His ministry, and ultimately His suffering. At the cross, she stood near her Son as He gave His life for the world.
7. Mary’s life was marked by humility, faith, and endurance. She trusted God’s word before she saw its fulfillment. She bore Christ into the world — and remained faithful even when the path was painful. Mary is honored not because she is divine, but because she believed God’s promise and obeyed.

SAINTS – WEEK 13 - ST. NICHOLAS OF MYRA

STORY

1. Nicholas was born in the third century in the city of Patara, in what is now modern-day Turkey. His parents were faithful Christians who raised him in the teachings of Christ. From an early age, Nicholas was known for his kindness and compassion.
2. When Nicholas was still young, his parents died during a plague. Though he was left with an inheritance, he chose not to spend his wealth on comfort or luxury. Instead, he remembered the words of Jesus about caring for the poor and storing treasures in heaven.
3. One story tells of a man who had three daughters but no money to provide for them. Without help, they faced hardship and shame. Nicholas learned of their situation and decided to help secretly. Under cover of night, he delivered bags of gold to the family's home, leaving them where they would be found. He did not seek praise or recognition. He desired only to help.
4. Nicholas continued this pattern of quiet generosity throughout his life. He became bishop of Myra and cared deeply for his people. He defended the truth of the Gospel, encouraged believers during persecution, and remained known not for power, but for mercy.
5. Nicholas understood that Christian giving is not about attention or applause. It is about reflecting the generosity of God. He gave because Christ had given to him.
6. Over time, stories of his kindness spread. Though legends later grew around his name, the heart of Nicholas' life remains clear: faithful generosity, quiet charity, and compassionate leadership rooted in Christ.