



# CELEBRATING SAINTS

STUDENT WORKBOOK

SAMPLE CHAPTER

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# Introduction

## Who Are Saints?

Saints are holy people who follow Jesus' life and his teachings. Saints were everyday people, too. Their faith inspired them to follow in Christ's footsteps and live Spirit-filled lives.

We pray to saints for help in time of need. They are celebrated by the Church on their individual feast days, and there are many rituals and customs for revering and remembering these exceptional individuals.

### Types of saints

There are two types of saints that the Catholic Church acknowledges. The first are known as 'acclaimed saints'. These are individuals such as St Peter or St Paul, who have been given the title because of their extreme holiness and are recognised universally.

The other type of saint is called a 'canonised saint'. In order to become a saint, these people need to go through a process called 'canonisation' whereby they are then recognised as a saint by the Catholic Church throughout the world.

After they die, saints are honoured by the Catholic Church in recognition for their good deeds and the work they carried out while they were alive.

### Choosing a saint's name for Confirmation

Saints used their gifts to inspire faith in God and to minister it to others. Through their actions and words, the saints nurtured the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.

At Confirmation you are asked to choose the name of a saint whom you admire and aspire to be like. Which saint will be your role model, and one that you can pray to for guidance?

### Miracles

**DID YOU KNOW?**

One of the requirements in order for a person to be canonised is evidence that two miracles have been performed.



# The Process of Canonisation

The official process of declaring someone a saint is called canonisation. Canonisation involves numerous stages and careful consideration of all facts and details.

## Investigation

Upon the death of a person who has demonstrated extreme holiness and has lived a life faithful to God, the Catholic Church may consider them for canonisation. The bishop of the diocese will oversee an investigation and write a report about the candidate.

## Veneration

The investigation is undertaken by the Vatican department known as the 'Congregation for the Causes of Saints'. This department studies the life of the deceased person. If the candidate died a martyr's death, the Congregation will decide whether the candidate sacrificed their life for the Church. The Congregation also researches the candidate's missionary work. If it is decided that the candidate lived with heroic virtues, the individual is then titled 'venerable'.

## 'Advocate of God'

This title refers to a person from the Vatican who is responsible for overseeing the case of the candidate and further examining their life. The advocate can also challenge the application for sainthood, raising any concerns or objections about the candidate.

## Beatification

This occurs when the candidate is proven responsible for a miracle. The miracle may involve someone being completely healed of an incurable disease by God through prayers to the candidate. A special ceremony is held where the Pope beatifies the candidate. The candidate is given the title 'Blessed.'

## Sainthood

Another miracle is required before the candidate will be canonised by the Pope and declared a saint by the Catholic Church.



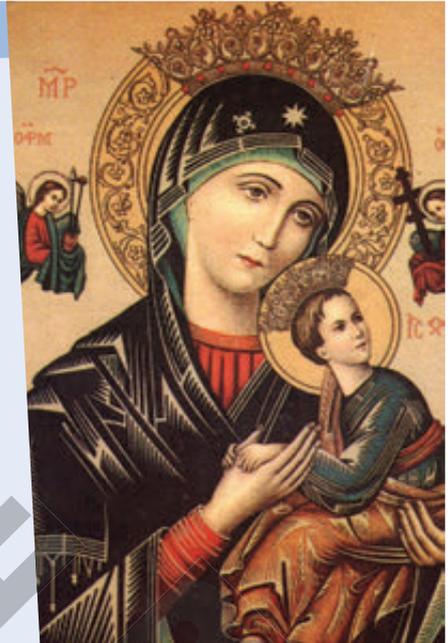
# Saint Mary, Mother of God

## Fast Facts...

<b>FEAST DAY:</b>	1 January
<b>PATRON OF:</b>	Humanity
<b>BIRTH:</b>	8 September, before 18 BC – Nativity of Mary
<b>DEATH:</b>	15 August, approx. 48 AD – Assumption of Mary

*"Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."*

- LUKE 1:38



## Background information

Mary was the Mother of Jesus Christ and is known as the greatest of all saints.

Mary was born in Jerusalem and grew up in the town of Nazareth. Her parents were believed to be St Anne and St Joachim.

## A woman of trust

The angel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary to tell her that she had been chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus. Without hesitation, Mary willingly accepted God's plan. She travelled with her husband Joseph to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.

## A woman of faith

Mary's faith in God was always strong. When Mary and Jesus were guests at the wedding at Cana in Galilee, Mary was the first to notice that the wine was running out and sought out her son to help. At his mother's request, Jesus carried out his first miracle, transforming water into wine. Even though Jesus had never worked a miracle before, Mary put her faith in her son and in God.

## A woman of courage

When Jesus was crucified, Mary stood with courage by the cross and watched her son suffer. At Jesus' request, she accepted his beloved disciple John as her son. After Jesus' death, Mary gathered in a room with his followers to pray with them and comfort them at the time of Pentecost. Mary lived her life as a humble servant of God. She faced many uncertain and challenging times with patience, courage and complete faith in God.

## Define it...

Galilee

Miracle

Pentecost

# Mary said 'Yes', so can you!



Mary was a humble woman who said yes when God asked her to be the mother of our Saviour. Her response was an immense act of faith.

1. Read the account of the Annunciation from *Luke 1:26-38*.
2. In the speech bubble write the message that the Angel Gabriel gave to Mary.

3. What words did Mary say to accept? Write her words in the speech bubbles above.

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4. Was it easy for Mary to say yes? Why or why not? Record your answer, and then compare with a partner.

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5. Think of a time when you were asked to do something difficult. Reflect on how you responded. Why is it sometimes hard to say yes?

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*God wants us to be strong followers and to make the right choices, even when this is difficult to do. What is God asking of you? How will you respond?*

**I say 'yes' to God when ...**

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## Further investigation

When we pray to Mary, we are asking her to speak to Jesus on our behalf. She can bring us closer to God. Find a quiet space and write a prayer to Mary asking her for guidance in helping you to say yes to God. Take your prayer home and pray it each night.

# We are all called to be disciples of Christ

The disciples were ordinary people called to follow Jesus. God invites us all to follow him and live out the Gospel. We are first invited at our baptism and then later at confirmation, when we are called upon to use the gifts he has given us and to share them with others.



1. Read *Matthew 4:18-20*. Stop! Think! Reflect! What were the disciples asked to do? How did they say yes to God?

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2. There are many everyday people who, like Mary, use their gifts to help others. Draw someone you know who lives a Spirit-filled life. Describe what they do for others and how their words or actions affect those around them.

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3. Interview two friends to find out how they use their unique gifts and talents to serve others. Compare this with how you use your gifts. Your teacher will guide you.

FRIEND 1	FRIEND 2	ME
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## Further investigation

Use a search engine to research a person who used their gifts and talents to serve and help others. Some suggestions might be Fred Hollows, Dr Victor Chang, Marie Curie.