

HOLY FRIENDS OF

Jesus



SAINTS of the
ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SEASON

December 3

St. Francis Xavier, Priest

(1506–1552)

Francis was a Spanish Jesuit priest who went to Indonesia and Japan as a missionary. He preached, taught and helped the sick and the poor. Thousands of people became Catholics because of him. He wanted to go to China to tell people about God but he died on the way there. He is the patron saint of missionaries.



Who would I most like to tell about Jesus?

December 4

St. John of Damascus

Priest & Doctor of the Church

(675–750)

John first worked in government but quit to become a priest and lived near Jerusalem. He was a great preacher (nicknamed the “golden speaker”) and teacher (the Latin word for teacher is “doctor”). He wrote many books about God and made up beautiful songs to sing in Church. He is the patron saint of crucifix makers.



How can I learn more about God this Advent?



December 6

St. Nicholas, Bishop

(died about 350)

Nicholas was the popular bishop of the town of Myra in southwest Turkey. The many stories about his love of children, his care for the sick and his secretly giving gifts to the poor became the basis for our modern Santa Claus (a name derived from St. Nicholas) who also gives gifts. He is the patron saint of children and sailors.



What gifts can I share with the poor to make their Christmas special?

December 7

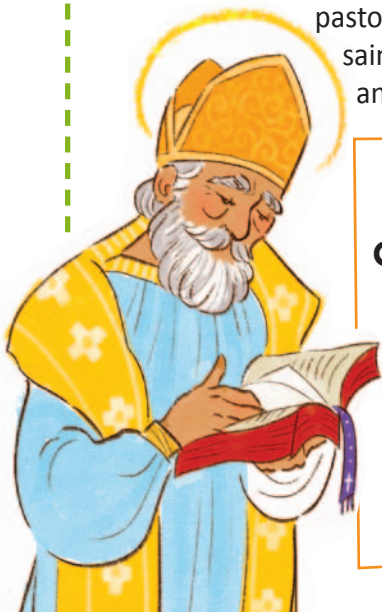


St. Ambrose

Bishop & Doctor of the Church

(339–397)

Ambrose was very smart and became the mayor of Milan, Italy. He did such a good job that the people also wanted him to be their bishop even though he was not yet a Catholic. After he was baptized, he became a famous preacher, teacher and pastor. He is the patron saint of beekeepers and candle makers.



Who would I most like to share the Christmas story with?

December 9



St. Juan Diego, Hermit

(1474–1548)

In 1531 Jesus' mother Mary appeared to Juan Diego at Guadalupe in Mexico looking like a Mexican princess and told him to build her a church. Juan told the bishop about Mary but the bishop did not believe him. So Mary told Juan to pick some roses for the bishop. When Juan opened his cloak, the roses fell out and there was a picture Mary painted on his cloak. He is the patron saint of native peoples.



How can I be like Juan and help people know more about Mary?



December 11

St. Damasus I, Pope

(304–384)

Damasus was a Spanish priest who eventually became pope. As pope, he lived very simply and strongly criticized all false teaching. Since Latin was the main language then, he asked his secretary St. Jerome to translate the Bible into Latin so everyone could learn about God from it. He is the patron saint of archaeologists.



How can I take a little more time to pray to God?

December 13

St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr

(died in 304)

Lucy was from a noble family. Because the Romans picked on Christians, she secretly became a Christian and then gave away her money to feed the poor. People told the police she was a Christian and they arrested her and put her to death. People with eye trouble began asking for Lucy's help because her name comes from *lux*, the Latin word for light.

She is the patron saint
of the blind.



**How can I help
feed a hungry
person?**

December 14

St. John of the Cross

Priest & Doctor of the Church

(1542–1591)

John was a priest who with St. Teresa of Avila helped change the rules of his community. But many did not like his changes and they put him in prison for almost a year. He wrote many books and poems about his relationship with God. He said it was like a trip that went through darkness to finally being with God. He is the patron saint of people who want to learn how to pray.



What can I do to help someone follow the rules at school or at home?

December 21

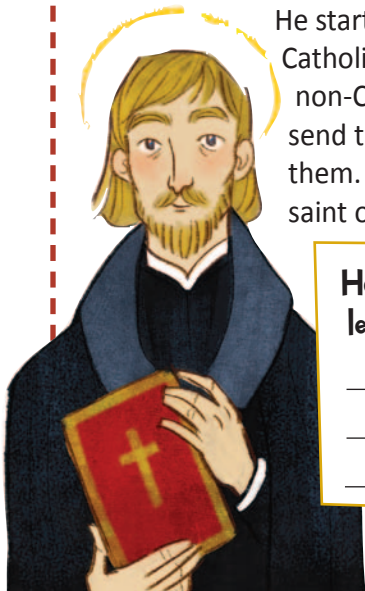
St. Peter Canisius

Priest & Doctor of the Church

(1521–1597)

Peter joined the Jesuit religious community and worked hard to make Catholic life better in southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland. He was a great preacher and a popular teacher, and his catechisms for both children and adults were best-sellers.

He started such good Catholic schools that even non-Catholics wanted to send their children to them. He is the patron saint of Germany.

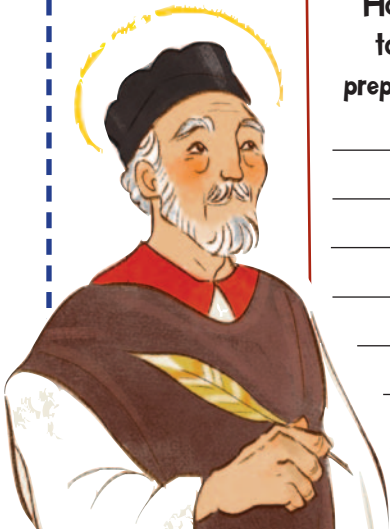


How can I help someone learn more about Jesus?

December 23

St. John of Kanty, Priest (1390–1473)

John was a Polish priest who taught about God and the Bible at Krakow University. Students loved his classes and he was always giving his money to students who needed help. He was buried in the College Church and his grave became a popular place to visit. He is the patron saint of Poland.



**How can I do more
to help my family
prepare for Christmas?**

December 26

St. Stephen, the First Martyr

(died about 33)

Stephen was one of 7 deacons (the Greek word means “a helper”) chosen to help the 12 apostles with their work. He told everyone about Jesus but some of his listeners got so mad they threw rocks at him and killed him. One of the people in the angry mob was a young man named Saul, who later changed his name to Paul and became

St. Paul the apostle.

Stephen is the patron saint of altar servers and deacons.



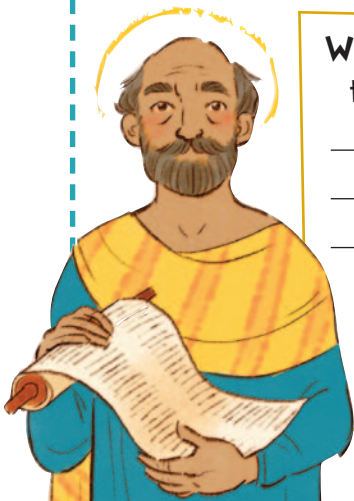
How can I forgive those who have hurt me?

December 27

St. John, Apostle & Evangelist

(died about 100)

John and his brother James, the sons of Zebedee, were called by Jesus from their family fishing boats to be apostles. They went with with Jesus until he died. After he died, John continued to heal and teach as Jesus did. He also wrote down the Gospel story of Jesus' life to help people learn about Jesus. He is the patron saint persons who study and write about God.



What would I most want to tell people about Jesus?

December 28

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

(died about 4 bc)

The Holy Innocents were the baby boys killed by King Herod who learned from the three wise men that a the new king was to be born. So Herod wanted to kill him. But since he did not know what Jesus looked like, he ordered all the baby boys under two years old to be killed. But an angel warned Joseph in a dream, and he escaped with Mary and Jesus and went to Egypt where they could be safe. They are the patron saints of babies.



What can I do to make sure little children are safe?

December 29

St. Thomas Becket

Bishop & Martyr

(1118–1170)

Thomas was named the head bishop of the English Catholic Church by King Henry II. But Thomas argued with the king, and had to run away to France for safety. When he came back, he and the king again argued and the king wished out loud to be rid of Thomas. Four of the king's soldiers heard this, and they went to

Thomas's church and killed him. He is the patron saint of parish priests.



How can I speak up if someone makes fun of my belief in God?

December 31

St. Sylvester I, Pope

(died in 335)

Sylvester was elected to be pope shortly after the Roman Emperor first allowed Christians to have their own churches. During his 21 years as pope, many new churches were built. He also invited bishops from all over the world to come to the town of Nicaea in Turkey to answer the question of whether Jesus was really God or not. He is a patron saint of the religious community of St. Benedict (Benedictines).



How can I pray better when I go to Church?
