

## Saints Related to Young People

### **Thomas Aquinas—Academics**

Thomas was a gentle teacher who believed faith and reason when used wisely would enable all humanity to know and love God as the angels. He studied in Paris from 1245-1248 under Saint Albert the Great, then accompanied Albertus to Cologne. Here he received the nickname “dumb ox,” though he is now considered a Doctor of the Church, and one of the most intelligent philosophers of all time.

### **Vitus—Against Oversleeping**

For obscure reasons, some 16th century Germans believed they could obtain a year's good health by dancing before the statue of Saint Vitus on his feast day. This dancing developed almost into a mania, and was confused with *chorea*, the nervous condition later known as *Saint Vitus' Dance*, the saint being invoked against it.

### **Francis of Assisi—Animals, Catholic Action**

It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching.

Son of a rich cloth merchant. Misspent youth. Street brawler and 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.

### **Christopher—Drivers**

His fame derives from the pious legend of him being a "Christ-bearer" (= Christopher). He was a powerfully built man who wandered the world in search of novelty and adventure. He came upon a hermit who lived beside a dangerous stream and served others by guiding them to safe places to cross.

### **George—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.

### **Aloysius Gonzaga—Catholic Youth**

Italian noble who grew up in a castle, the son of a compulsive gambler. Cousin of Saint Rudolph Acquaviva. 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. Spiritual student of Saint Robert Bellarmine. Tended plague victims in Rome in the outbreak of 1591.

### **Joseph—Families, doubt**

Descendant of the house of David. Layman. Carpenter. Earthly spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Foster and adoptive father of Jesus Christ. Visionary who was visited by angels. Noted for his willingness to immediately get up and do what God told him.

### **John the Apostle—Friendship**

Son of Zebedee and Salome. Fisherman. Brother of Saint James the Great, and called one of the *Sons of Thunder*. Disciple of Saint John the Baptist. Friend of Saint Peter the Apostle. Called by Jesus during the first year of His ministry, and traveled everywhere with Him, becoming so close as to be known as *the*

*beloved disciple*. 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.

### **Agnes of Rome—Girl Scouts**

At age 12 or 13 Agnes was ordered to sacrifice to pagan gods and lose her virginity by rape. 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. Martyr Mentioned in first eucharistic prayer. On her feast day two lambs are blessed at her church in Rome, and then their wool is woven into the palliums (bands of white wool) which the pope confers on archbishops as symbol of their jurisdiction.

### **Martin De Porres—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. Promoted to almoner, he begged more than \$2,000 a week from the rich to support the poor and sick of Lima. Placed in charge of the Dominican's infirmary; known for his tender care of the sick and for his spectacular 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.

### **Cecilia—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 in order to see it, he must be purified. He agreed to the purification, and was baptised; 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 baptised. The *Acta* of Cecilia includes the following: "While the profane music of her wedding was heard, Cecilia was singing in her heart a hymn of love for Jesus, her true spouse." It was this phrase that led to her association with music, singers, musicians, etc.

### **Isadore of Sevilla—Internet**

Son of Severianus and Theodora, known for their piety. Initially a poor student, he gave the problem over to God and became one of the most learned men of his time. Priest. Required seminaries in every diocese, wrote a rule for religious orders. Prolific writer including a dictionary, an encyclopedia, a history of Goths, and a history of the world beginning with creation. Completed the Mozarabic liturgy which is still in use in Toledo, Spain. Presided at the Second Council of Seville, and the Fourth Council of Toledo. Introduced the works of Aristotle to Spain.

### **Genesius- Theater**

Benedictine monk. Martyred defending the altar at the monastery Bleze, Côte-d'Or, France against Norman invaders

### **John Bosco—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. Worked with youth, finding places where they could meet, play and pray, teaching catechism to orphans and apprentices. 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, under the

protection of Our Lady, Help of Christians, and Saint Francis de Sales. Founded the *Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians* in 1872, and *Union of Cooperator Salesians* in 1875.

### **Francis DeSales—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. Doctor of Law. It was at this point that 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.

### **Raphael—Guardian Angels**

Archangel. One of the three angels known by name, and one of the seven that stand before God's throne. Lead character in the deuterocanonical book of *Tobit* in which he travelled with (and guarded) Tobiah, and cured a man's blindness; hence his connection with travellers, young people, blindness, healing and healers. The force behind the healing power of the sheep pool mentioned in John 5:1-4.

### **Ignatius of Loyola—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 the only books he had access to were *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. Lived in a cave from 1522 to 1523. 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.

*Main Source of Facts:* <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/patron02.htm>