

CONFIRMATION

Why choose a confirmation saint?

The Holy Spirit has enabled Christians of every century to live like Jesus and become saints. We are ALL called to be saints. Saints are holy people who tried to follow Jesus with all their hearts. The saints were ordinary Christians, just like each of us. They relied on the Spirit and followed where the Spirit led. Saints have been men, women and children. Some were married and some were single; some were members of religious orders and some were not. Saints have come from all parts of the world, from every age and from all walks of life. From heaven, saints continue to watch over and pray for the Church, for all of us. As Catholics, we remember and honor the saints because they show us how we can follow Jesus with all our hearts.

We choose a confirmation saint (like we choose a confirmation sponsor) so that we have a heavenly friend and guide who prays for us and inspires us to live life to the fullest for Jesus. When you choose a confirmation saint, you take on that saint's name during the confirmation Mass. This is your "confirmation name," and the Bishop calls you by that name when you are confirmed.

Begin thinking about who your confirmation saint friend will be. Pick a saint (canonized, blessed, or servant of God) who speaks to you somehow - get to know their story. Catholics ask saints for intercession, which is praying on behalf of another person or group. Ask for intercession just like you ask friends to pray for you. Your confirmation saint can become an incredible friend who constantly lifts you up in prayer.

What an incredible gift we have in the communion of saints. The saints are like us! They are our ancestors, our teachers, our friends... they are real people (not divine) who doubted and sinned but continued to strive for righteousness. Saints live heroically virtuous lives and offer their lives for others. They may have even been martyred for their faith. Some saints lived thousands of years ago, and some lived very recently.

That means that anyone can become a saint. In fact, it's your goal to become one! You can be a saint here on earth, and maybe one day the Catholic Church will officially declare you a saint! The Church encourages all of us to holiness by raising up women and men (the saints) who have lived especially holy lives as examples. These people have gone through the process of canonization, that is, the official procedure within the Church for recognizing saints.

The saints experienced suffering, joy, pain, broken promises, peace, frustration, war, injury, heartbreak... they know our hearts. But mostly, they know what it takes to be united with God here on this messy earth. They know what it takes to live for Him. They were people who believed in God's mercy and who never gave up. They relied on God's

divine power to help them make the right choices... they didn't have the strength on their own.

You've probably heard the phrase "the communion of saints" a few times before... but what does it mean? The communion of saints is another description of all Christians both on earth and in heaven. But the phrase describes two realities in the Catholic life: the spiritual practices that represent and bring about the unity of believers, and the actual communion that ties together all believers, both living and dead.

This is the basis for praying for and talking to people who have died. Why would we do such a thing? Because people who love each other pray for each other. Just because a person has died, it doesn't mean he or she cannot bring our needs before God in Heaven. We can ask the saints and loved ones who have died to pray for us. We believe they hear us when we talk to them and are with God in Heaven.

When we choose a confirmation saint, we don't just learn about that saint and then never think about our saint again. Instead, we can build a relationship with them. You can learn a lot about people by stalking their social media or asking their friends about them, but you can't actually get to know someone until you spend time with him or her. The saints are no different — they're not people to be observed from afar, but holy friends we can actually have a relationship with.

St. Benedict wrote, "May the strong have something to strive for and the weak have nothing to run from." The saints can relate to us at our weakest and push us higher at our strongest. Struggling to overcome the same old sins? Saint Augustine and St. Mark Ji Tianxiang have been there, too. Ready for greatness? Saint Maximilian Kolbe and St. Ignatius of Loyola will give you something to fight for. Want to glorify God with your humor? Blessed Miguel Pro is your guy. Having a hard time forgiving someone who hurt you — really, really hurt you? Saint Maria Goretti gets it.

The saints will challenge you. They're not challenging in the sense that we don't measure up; they're challenging because, with God's grace, we can become holy, too. The saints can seem intimidating. Just look at JPII: he wrote the equivalent of 20 Bibles in length, was late for everything because he wanted to personally encounter everyone who crossed his path, had a sixth sense for sniffing out Adoration chapels, and forgave his would-be assassin! But while these actions indicate his holiness, JPII showed that they aren't the main goal. The main goal is loving God wholeheartedly and becoming like Him. We will never be JPII, but we're not supposed to be. God made His people unique in His image because there are infinite ways to express His perfection. We choose a confirmation saint because the saints show us and inspire us to live out our destiny: to become like Christ, yet be uniquely ourselves!

How to find a confirmation saint

Find a saint who intrigues you. Is there a saint who sparks your curiosity? How about a patron saint of something you love? A saint with a goofy name or similar struggles as you? A saint you're resisting getting to know or a saint you just don't "get"? Let these questions drive you deeper into who they are. They are perfect "conversation starters" for befriending the saints!

Steps to choosing a confirmation saint

1. Pray about it - Ask God which saint will lead you closest to Him and then listen closely for a response. God speaks to us in mysterious ways!
2. Ask your faithful friends and family if they recommend any saints for you. Do you remind them of a certain saint?
3. Focus less on the name of the saint and more on how they lived their life - don't pick a name just because it sounds cool or flows with your name.
4. Find a list of saints online or in a book and look for saints you can relate to or who share interests with you.
5. Make a list of 3, 4, or 5 saints and learn about them!
6. Choose the saint who inspires you and who you want to emulate. Choose a saint you can relate to and who will lead you closer to God.

Learning about your saint

- What century did this saint live in?
- What city and country did this saint live in?
- What was this saint's occupation?
- When does the Catholic Church celebrate this saint's feast day?
- What is this saint the patron saint of?
- How did this saint live his or her life, follow Christ, and make decisions to do God's will, even when it was difficult?
- How did the saint help others during his or her life?
- What are virtues characterized in the saint's life?

Getting to know your saint

Invest. Start by reading their story online and intentionally asking for their intercession in prayer with a simple, "St. ____, pray for us." Go deeper by reading a biography or, better yet, something they wrote. Let their spirituality and service inspire you in your own life, perhaps by making an offering to merciful love like St. Therese, incorporating silence into your life like St. Joseph, using media for evangelization like St. Maximilian

Kolbe, or striving to feel with the Church and lift up the poor in your community like St. Oscar Romero.

Read about their early life. Often times, seeing the saints when they were young is all it takes to collapse the distance between us because we see that, in many ways, we aren't that different. This can also give us insights into how to follow Christ as young people.

Seek out their advice. This is a great way to invite a saint into your life more intimately and vulnerably. As you pray for their intercession, you can look to their life for insight into your own and often to their writings to see what they really would have said in a given situation. The saints are already pursuing you. They're humble and don't draw attention to themselves, but if you pay attention, you will begin to notice the saints are walking with you already! Having a saint to rely on throughout your life journey can make a huge difference in your pursuit of holiness and happiness.

More ideas on how to find a saint

Feast day

Every day of the year is the feast of at least one saint... often more than one. Who are the saints with a feast day on your birthday?

Interests, talents, hobbies, job, vocation, heritage

God made each of us with interests and talents that point us toward hobbies, jobs, and vocations, and there's a patron saint for every one of those details. Many of us feel a particular attachment to our cultural heritage—there's a patron saint for every country and diocese, and many cities. Even particular sicknesses and struggles have their own patron saints—those who suffer might find those saints to seem closer to them than any other. So... do you share the same interests, talents, hobbies, job, vocation, or heritage with a certain saint? Is the patron saint of something specific like athletes, teachers, or youth someone you can relate to?

Your name

If your first or middle name is the name of a saint, you can keep that name as your confirmation name if you'd like. Research and get to know a saint with the same name!

Saint resources

- Catholic Saints A-Z: Popular Canonized Catholic Saints: <https://mycatholic.life/saints/>
- Biggest and Best List of Confirmation Saints (for Guys and Girls): <https://lifeteen.com/biggest-best-list-confirmation-saints-guys-girls/>
- Saints A to Z: <https://www.catholic.org/saints/stindex.php?lst=L>
- List of Catholic Saints: <https://www.catholic-saints.info>
- Calendar of Saints: <https://catholicsaints.info/calendar-of-saints/>
- Catholic Saints Info: <https://catholicsaints.info>