

CATHOLIC SAINTS
WITH
JULY FEAST DAYS
RESOURCE KIT

CATHOLIC SAINTS WITH JULY FEAST DAYS

Feast days are an opportunity to remember and be inspired by the lives of the saints, who are examples of holiness for us today. Read and share these short biographies of some saints whose feast days are celebrated during the month of July. Catechists can share the simple printable activities that follow with their students to complete, or families can complete the activities together. Learning about and celebrating the lives of the saints is a great way for families to share and grow in their Catholic faith any and every day of the year.

In this kit you'll find short biographies and printable activities for these Catholic saints with July feast days:



Saint Kateri Tekakwitha



Saints Anne and Joachim



Saint Ignatius Loyola

SAINT KATERI TEKAKWITHA

On July 14, the Church celebrates the feast day of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha.

Kateri Tekakwitha was born near the present-day town of Auriesville, New York, in the year 1656. Her mother, an Algonquin, was a Christian. Her father, a leader among his people, the Mohawk, was not.

When Kateri was four years old, a disease called smallpox struck her village. Kateri's mother, father, and baby brother all died from the disease. Little Kateri survived, but the disease scarred her face and left her partially blind. She was adopted by her aunts and an uncle, a Mohawk chief.

When Kateri was a teenager, she asked permission from her uncle to receive religious instruction from a Jesuit missionary. Her uncle did not approve, but he allowed her to study the faith.

On Easter Sunday, 1676, at the age of twenty, Kateri was baptized. After her Baptism, members of her family and others in the village began to shun Kateri and treat her harshly. Because of this, Kateri decided to leave her village and travel to a Catholic mission near Montreal, in Canada. In August 1677, with the help of some Christian friends, Kateri set out on the two-hundred-mile journey. She arrived at the mission in October. There, on Christmas Day in 1677, she received her First Holy Communion.

At the mission Kateri taught prayers to children and told them stories about the life of Jesus. She nursed the sick, gathered offerings for those in need, and helped the elderly with their daily chores. She and another young woman asked permission to start an order of religious sisters, but their request was denied. Kateri's health was beginning to fail.

Kateri died during Holy Week in 1680, at the age of twenty-four. Her last words, spoken in Mohawk, were *Jesos Konoronkwa*: "Jesus, I love you." In 1943 the Church declared her Venerable. Pope John Paul II declared her Blessed in 1980. On October 21, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI canonized Kateri. She is the first Native American to be named a saint.

When her life became hard, Kateri turned to God in prayer. She focused on helping others, sharing stories about Jesus, and doing everyday chores as acts of love.



Saints Anne and Joachim

The Church celebrates the feast day of Saints Anne and Joachim on July 26.

Though the dates of their births and deaths are unknown, Anne and Joachim lived in Nazareth, a small village in Galilee.

During their lifetime, many of the people in this region made their living by growing grapes, olives, and grains on the hills surrounding the town. Grandparents, parents, and children lived and worked together. At harvest time, the entire village would pitch in to help pick the crops. They would also keep watch in one of the stone towers erected to guard against thieves. At night they might pass the time and entertain the children by playing musical instruments or telling stories.

Anne (whose name means “grace”) was born in Bethlehem but settled in Nazareth after she and Joachim were married. Joachim was a shepherd, and the two lived happily together for many years. Their one great sorrow was that they had no children.

Having no children was not only a hardship for Anne and Joachim, but it was a source of shame, since children were considered a blessing from God. One day, after Joachim heard the neighbors making fun of him and Anne for being childless, he went out into the desert to pray for a child. Anne remained at home, dressed in mourning clothes and weeping in sadness. A servant girl, seeing her distress, reminded Anne to put her trust in God.

Both Anne and Joachim were assured by angels that God would bless them with a child who would be known throughout the world. Anne and Joachim placed their faith in God. Anne gave birth to Mary, who was to become the Mother of Jesus!

Anne and Joachim were overjoyed with the birth of their daughter, Mary. Mary was raised to love and trust in God.

Although we do not know much about the lives of Anne and Joachim, we honor them as the parents of Mary. Anne and Joachim remind us that we need to trust in God always.

Joachim and Anne are considered patrons of those who want to have children. They are celebrated as the grandparents of Jesus, and so they are also the patrons of grandparents.



Saint Ignatius Loyola

On July 31, the Church celebrates the Feast Day of Saint Ignatius Loyola.

Ignatius Loyola was born in Guipúzcoa, in northern Spain. He was the youngest of thirteen children. His family was wealthy, and his father was a nobleman. As a boy, Ignatius, called Inigo, dreamed of becoming a famous soldier. At sixteen he became a page and eventually a soldier in the Spanish army. But he was badly wounded while fighting against the French.



During his long and painful recovery, Ignatius was given books. Two of the books he read were about the life of Jesus Christ and lives of the saints. These books inspired him to adjust the direction of his life and change his goals.

Instead of fighting in the army, Ignatius now wanted to dedicate his life to Jesus. He went to live as a hermit where he devoted long hours to prayer and to caring for the sick. He wrote a book called *The Spiritual Exercises* to help people become more like Christ.

After making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Ignatius decided to study for the priesthood. While Ignatius was studying for the priesthood, his life of prayer and simplicity influenced several of his fellow students. Six of them decided to become priests as well. After they were ordained priests, they all made a special vow of obedience to the pope. This meant that they would carry out any work the pope asked them to do.

These men called themselves the Society of Jesus and received formal recognition as a religious order from Pope Paul III. The Society of Jesus soon came to be known as the Jesuits.

Ignatius was elected as the Jesuits' first general, or leader. He carried out this role until his death at the age of 65. He saw Jesuits start schools, lead retreats based on *The Spiritual Exercises*, and sail off to far away countries as missionaries.

Today the Jesuits form the largest male religious order in the Catholic Church and are present in almost every country in the world. Pope Francis is the first Jesuit to be elected pope.

Sometimes referred to as a "soldier for Christ," Saint Ignatius Loyola worked to strengthen the Kingdom of God on earth by trying to be like Christ in everything he did. He and the order he started were able to accomplish great things by focusing on this simple goal. *The Spiritual Exercises* that he wrote can help us to stay focused on this goal as well.

The Lives of the Saints

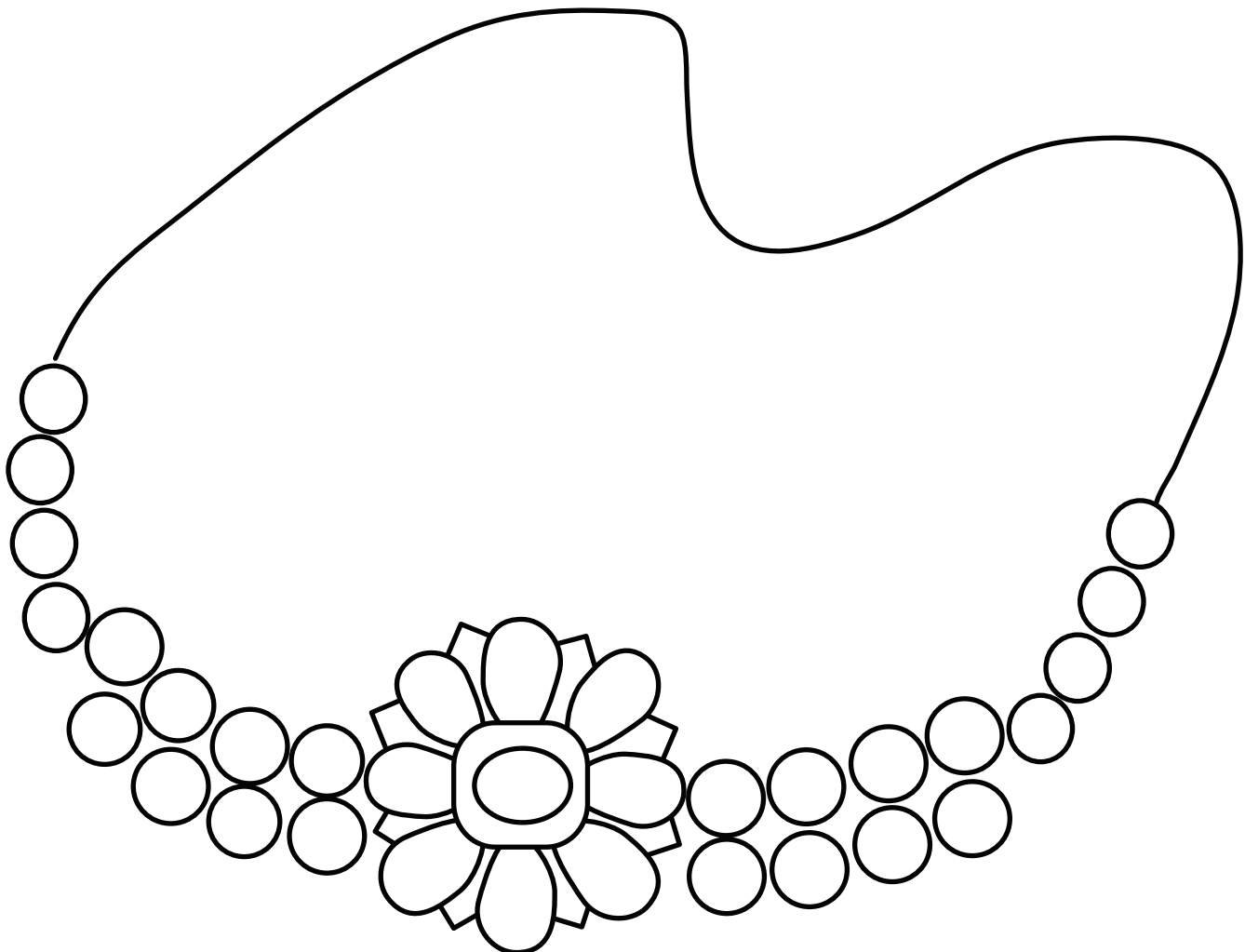
Name _____

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

Kateri was a Native American. As a teenager she became a Catholic even though her family and friends were against the idea. When Kateri was treated unkindly, she turned to God in prayer.

Each day Kateri worked very hard at her chores. As a Native American girl, Kateri learned how to decorate clothing and other items with colorful beads.

Decorate the beaded necklace below.



The Lives of the Saints

Name _____

Saints Anne and Joachim

Anne and Joachim placed their faith in God. They were overjoyed with the birth of their daughter, Mary. Mary was raised to love and trust in God.

On each strip of paper, write a way parents and grandparents pass on their faith to us. The first one has been done for you. Cut out the strips of paper. Glue the end of each strip together. Link the strips together as you glue them to create a “chain of faith”!

teaching prayers

The Lives of the Saints

Name _____

Saint Ignatius Loyola

Saint Ignatius Loyola wrote *The Spiritual Exercises* to help people become more like Christ. One way to do this is by using our imaginations to read the Gospels. We might try to think about what we would do or say if we were part of the story.

Read the Gospel about Jesus calming the sea (Mark 4:35-41). Try to imagine being in the boat with the disciples. Then fill in your answers to the questions that follow.

‘On that day, as evening drew on, he said to them, ‘Let us cross to the other side.’ Leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat just as he was. And other boats were with him. A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him and said to him, ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Quiet! Be still!’ The wind ceased and there was great calm. Then he asked them, ‘Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?’ They were filled with great awe and said to one another, ‘Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?’”

Imagine yourself in this story...

How does it feel to be one of the people in the boat with Jesus? What do you talk to him about as the boat sets sail?

How do you react to a storm that nearly sinks your boat? What do you think about Jesus sleeping through it all? Do you join the disciples in waking him up?

How do feel when you see Jesus calming the winds and quieting the seas? How does this affect your faith? What will you tell your family and friends when you get to shore?

Spend some quiet time talking to Jesus. Tell him about something in your life that is intimidating or discouraging. How can Jesus help you to find peace in this situation?
