



CATHOLIC SAINTS
with
FEBRUARY FEAST DAYS
RESOURCE KIT

CATHOLIC SAINTS WITH FEBRUARY FEAST DAYS

Feast days are an opportunity to remember and be inspired by the lives of holy people and the saints, who are examples of holiness for us today. Read and share these short biographies of holy people whose feast days are celebrated during the month of February. 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 and holy people 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 and holy people with February feast days:



Saint Brigid



Saint Blaise



Blessed Pope Pius IX



Saint Josephine Bakhita



Blessed Noel Pinot



Blessed Sebastian of Aparicio

Saint BRIGID

On February 1, the Church celebrates the feast day of Saint Brigid, the patroness of Ireland.

Brigid's father Dubtach was the Irish Leinster King. Her mother was a Christian slave who had been baptized by Saint Patrick. When Brigid was old enough, she went to serve her father as one of his slaves.

Brigid was very beautiful. She loved all of God's creatures and enjoyed taking walks in the forests and spending time with animals. She was very generous and kind. To help the poor and hungry, she often gave away her father's possessions. This did not please Dubtach. He finally gave Brigid her freedom. He tried to arrange a marriage for Brigid, but she wanted to become a nun. Legend has it that she prayed that God would take her beauty away so that no one would ever want to marry her. Her prayer was answered. After she became a nun, as legend has it, her beauty came back.

Brigid built a convent. Other women wanted to join her way of life and soon her first convent had seven nuns. This was Ireland's first Christian religious community of women. Young girls came to the convent to be taught. Sick people traveled to Brigid's convent for care. Bishops asked her to start convents all over Ireland. She traveled throughout Ireland building convent schools and hospitals.

Brigid made a small cross made from tall grasses to teach others about Jesus. These crosses became identified with Saint Brigid. On Brigid's feast day in Ireland, people weave crosses from tall grasses and put them in their homes to keep them safe.



SAINT BLAISE

On February 3, the Church celebrates the feast day of Saint Blaise.

Saint Blaise was a bishop in the city of Sebaste, part of modern-day Armenia. Though the year of his birth is unknown, we know that he lived in the fourth century. He died in the year 316. An account of his life was written 400 years after his death. Many miracles are attributed to Saint Blaise.

During his life, Saint Blaise lived on the edge of the mighty Roman empire. The Roman empire was the most powerful force in the world during the time of Saint Blaise. Its territories included most of Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa.

During Blaise's life, it took a lot of courage to be a Christian. There were periods in which Christians were persecuted by the Roman government. Some of the Romans were suspicious of the Christian faith. Because they did not understand the beliefs and practices of Christians, they viewed them as a threat to the empire. Many Christians were arrested and killed if they refused to give up the faith.

Saint Blaise's kindness demonstrated the positive impact that Christians could have on society. Blaise would have known Christians who had suffered for their faith. With other Christians, he honored the memory of the martyrs and prayed for the courage to keep the faith too. Yet Blaise also knew he could not live in fear.

Before he became a bishop, it is said that Saint Blaise was a physician blessed with healing power. As a bishop, Saint Blaise was responsible for encouraging the people of his diocese and he attended to the physical and spiritual needs of Sebaste.

When Licinius, the Roman emperor, ordered a new persecution of Christians, Blaise escaped from the city. He lived quietly in a cave until Roman soldiers found and arrested him. Blaise was thrown into prison. He was given the opportunity to give up his faith and worship the Roman gods, but he refused. As a result, he was tortured and beheaded.

While Blaise was in prison, he is said to have performed a miraculous healing. A woman had a son who was choking on a fish bone. She brought the boy to Blaise and asked him to help her son. Blaise prayed that God would heal the child, and suddenly, the bone became dislodged and the boy could breathe again! Blaise reminded the people who had witnessed the miracle to thank God for this sign of his love.

As a result of this story, people pray to Saint Blaise for healing of all illnesses of the throat. On the Feast Day of Saint Blaise, a special blessing of the throat is offered in many parishes in the United States and the world: "Through the intercession of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from ailments of the throat and from every other evil."

The feast of this popular medieval saint is celebrated in many ways around the world. Blaise always cared about the physical and spiritual well-being of others. Even as he faced terrible suffering, he offered to God the prayers and concerns of the people who came to him. Since we were all created by God, we too should care for and respect ourselves and each other. And like Saint Blaise, we can share the Good News by being kind to others by what we say and do.



BLESSED POPE PIUS IX

On February 7, the Church celebrates the feast day of Pope Pius IX, who was a great leader in spiritual matters.

Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti was born in Italy into a noble family on May 3, 1792. He was kind-hearted, friendly, and generous. He attended the Piarist College in Rome. Giovanni wanted to be a member of the Noble Guard whose job it was to escort the Pope when he traveled. He was not allowed to be a member of this group because he suffered from epileptic attacks. He then decided to study theology and became a priest.

As a priest, Giovanni went to Chile and Peru to assist in missionary work. Because of this trip, he is remembered as the first pope to visit South America. When he returned, he became an archbishop and later, a cardinal. As a leader in the church, he tried to persuade people to live in peace with their enemies and show mercy towards one another.

In 1846, Giovanni was elected Pope. As pope, Giovanni denounced secret societies and communism. He proved to be a great leader in spiritual matters. The first Vatican Council took place while he was pope. This council proclaimed the infallibility of the pope. This means that when making decisions about faith and morals for the Church, the pope cannot be wrong. As Pope Pius IX, Giovanni declared that Mary was born without sin. The Church celebrates this today as the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Pope Pius IX was pope longer than any other pope—thirty-two years.



SAINT JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

On February 8, the Church celebrates the feast day of Saint Josephine Bakhita, a modern African saint, and a denouncement of slavery.

Josephine was born in Darfur, Africa around the year 1869. She described her childhood as carefree, comfortable and happy, and was surrounded by loving family. However, when she was seven years old she was kidnapped and sold into slavery. During her youth, she endured many terrible experiences as a slave and was resold many times. She was finally sold to the Italian Consul who treated her with kindness and ultimately gave her to a friend in Italy.



Josephine became the nanny to this friend's daughter, Mimmina. When Mimmina's parents had to travel on business to another land, they left Mimmina and Josephine in the care of the Canossian Sisters. While living with these nuns, Josephine learned about God. She was baptized and confirmed in 1890. She chose to remain with the Canossian Sisters and was no longer considered a slave. She became a Canossian Sister in 1896.

As a sister, Josephine was sent to live in Schio, in Northern Italy. Here she had several jobs including sewing, cooking, embroidering, and answering the door. She was very gentle, had a calming voice, and always smiled. The people of Schio loved her humility and kindness. The Sisters in her community appreciated her sweet nature, her goodness, and her great desire to tell others about God.

At the end of her life, she became ill and suffered greatly. But through it all, she remained cheerful and kept her smile.

Josephine Bakhita lived a very simple and humble life. One of her greatest gifts was her smile. Even when she was suffering, Josephine continued to share the gift of her smile with others. Josephine considered each stage of her life as part of God's special plan for her and she accepted each willingly. Josephine Bakhita is the patron saint of the Sudan and holds a special meaning to those who suffer and are oppressed in any way. She has been adopted as the patron saint of Sudan and human trafficking survivors.

BLESSED NOEL PINOT

On February 21, the Church celebrates the feast day of Blessed Noel Pinot.

Blessed Noel Pinot was born and grew up in France. He dedicated his life to God. He was ordained a priest and served as a pastor for many years. This was during the time of the French Revolution, a time of great struggle and change in France.

The people leading this revolt wanted to separate the Church of France from the pope. Noel had been a pastor for two years when this law was passed. Noel believed that breaking off from the pope was wrong. He refused to take the oath supporting the new law and was exiled from his church. He was not even allowed to come within eight miles of it.

During his exile, Noel continued to help his parishioners in secret. He knew he was putting his life in danger, but he continued to celebrate Mass for his parishioners anyway. He also encouraged other priests to stay true to the pope and not take the oath. Unfortunately, one of Noel's parishioners betrayed him. The person told the police how Noel was disobeying the government. When Noel was about to say Mass one Sunday, the police came and arrested him. They held him in prison for a week and tortured him, trying to get him to take the oath. When the police realized that Noel would not give in to their wishes, he was sentenced to death. However, his faith remained strong. Even while he was led to his death, he repeated the beginning lines of Mass: "I will go in to the altar of God, to God who gives joy to my youth." The life of Blessed Noel Pinot is a reminder of the importance of staying true to our beliefs even when it is hard to do so.



BLESSED SEBASTIAN OF APARICIO

On February 25, the Church celebrates the feast day of Blessed Sebastian of Aparicio.

Sebastian was born in Spain in 1502. His parents were very poor. Sebastian worked as a shepherd until he was fifteen years old to help support his family. He continued to help his family by working at many different types of jobs; he worked as a servant to a wealthy woman and as a farm helper.

Eventually, Sebastian moved to Mexico. He began to make plows and wagons to help the farmers. He trained bulls and oxen. He built roads to connect towns and to make trading easier for farmers and others. Sebastian became very rich, but he lived very simply and gave most of his money to the poor. He spent his time providing transportation to those who needed it, feeding the hungry, and teaching Mexicans various skills.

Sebastian married when he was sixty years old. His wife died after only one year of marriage. He then remarried and the same thing happened. Then he gave away all his money and possessions and became a Franciscan. He spent his time as a Franciscan begging for food for his brothers and for the poor that they cared for. He was very humble, sweet and kind. Like Saint Francis of Assisi, he had a special way with animals; they seemed to understand what he said when he talked to them.

Sebastian spent his life thinking about others before himself. He gave away all his possessions to those in need. He worked very hard all of his life helping others. This example, along with his living a prayerful and simple life, drew others closer to God. Whether as a single person, a married man, or a Franciscan, Sebastian always worked for the good of others, helping to make their lives better.

One of the roads Sebastian built to connect towns in Mexico is still in use today. He is the patron saint of road builders and travelers.



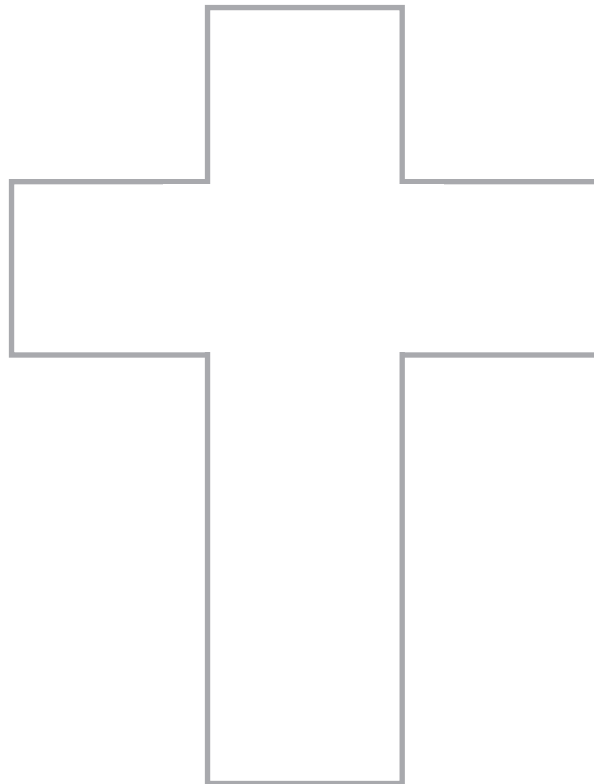
The Lives of the Saints

Name _____

Saint Brigid

Brigid lived in Ireland around the time that Saint Patrick converted this country to Christianity. Saint Patrick used a shamrock to teach about the Holy Trinity while Saint Brigid used a small cross made from tall grasses to teach others about Jesus.

Make a cross to place in your home. Cut strips of construction paper and glue them on the cross below. Cut out the cross and put it in a special place in your home. Then say the prayer at the bottom of the page.



Dear Saint Brigid,

You made crosses and used them to teach others about Jesus.

Bless this cross. Protect our home and keep us safe. Amen.

The Lives of the Saints

Name _____

Saint Blaise

Saint Blaise lived at a time when many people had never heard of Christianity. Some people were suspicious of Christians because Christian beliefs and practices were new to them. Saint Blaise's kindness demonstrated the positive impact that Christians could have on society.

Think about the ways in which being a Christian has a positive impact on your life. Write an e-mail to a friend describing one of these ways.

<input type="button" value="Send"/>	
To:	<input type="text"/>
Subject:	<input type="text"/>

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The Lives of the Saints

Name _____

Blessed Pope Pius IX

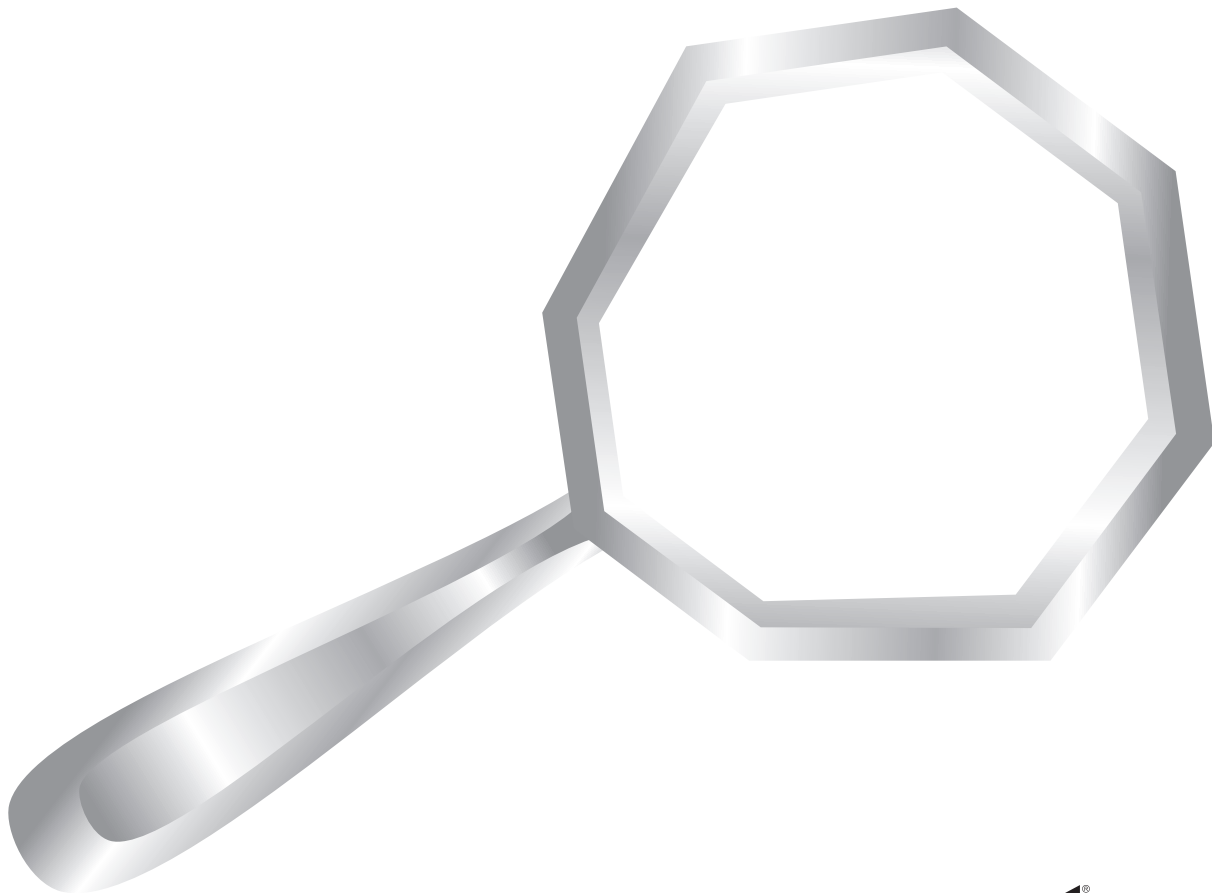
When Pope Pius IX was young, he was sick. This prevented him from joining the Noble Guard, something he wanted to do. He then became a priest. He was later chosen to be the pope and was a great leader. He was the pope longer than any other pope.

Pope Pius IX was able to be a priest and then pope. In this way, he was able to serve the Catholic Church and help others.

Is there something that you would like to be able to do but cannot?

What is something that you can do?

In the mirror below, draw a picture of something you can do.



The Lives of the Saints

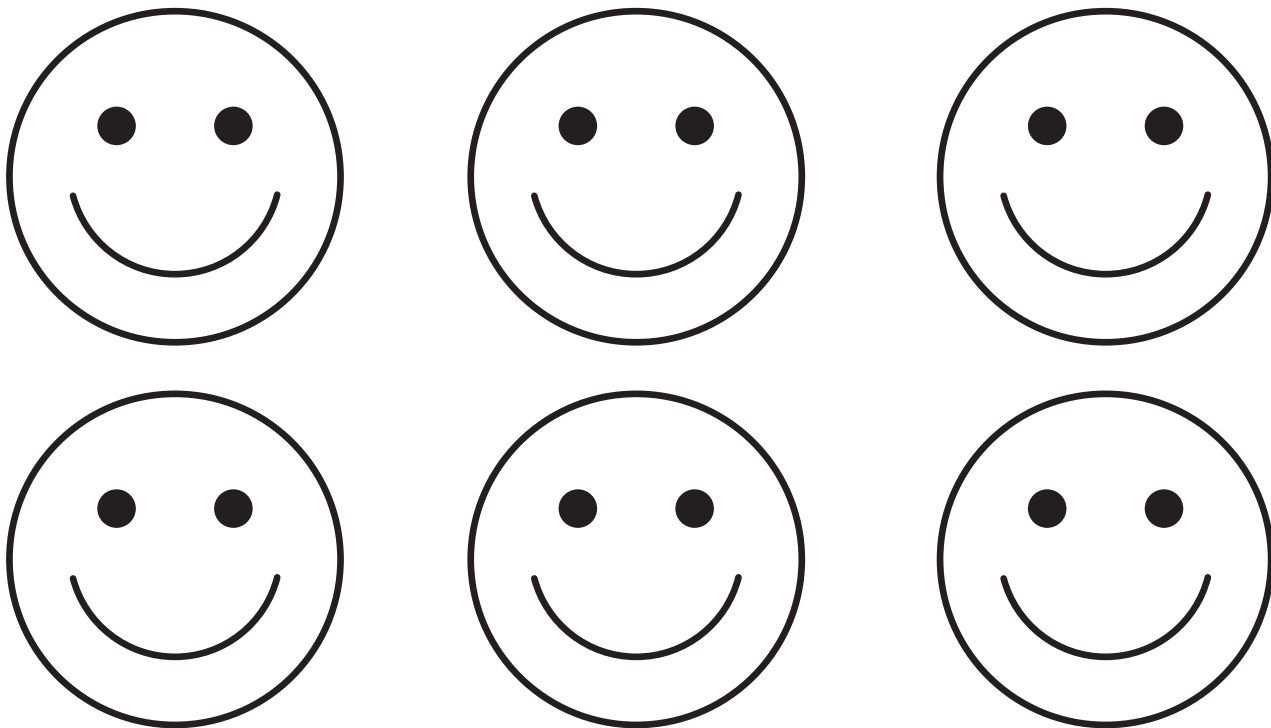
Name _____

Saint Josephine Bakhita

When Josephine Bakhita was young, she was a slave. She suffered as a slave. When she was older, she became a nun and spent her life serving God and others. Josephine forgave those who had hurt her. She believed that these experiences helped her to know God.

As a nun, she was given many jobs to do. She did each job cheerfully and with a smile on her face. Others loved her kind and sweet nature.

Each of us has special jobs to do, at home and at school. We, like Josephine, can do these jobs with a smile on our face. Each time you do a job with a smile on your face, color and cut out one of the smiles below. Place it on the prayer table or in a special place.



The Lives of the Saints

Name _____

Blessed Noel Pinot

Blessed Noel Pinot was a very brave man. Even though he was putting himself in danger, he continued celebrating Mass. He did this not only to stay true to his beliefs, but also because he knew that his parishioners needed him at that time more than ever. He put God and helping his parishioners before his needs or wants.



Celebrating Mass was important to Blessed Noel Pinot and his parishioners. Gathering for Mass is important for us today.

For each part of the Mass write one way you participate with the celebrant and the assembly.

Introductory Rites _____

Liturgy of the Word _____

Liturgy of the Eucharist _____

Concluding Rites _____

The Lives of the Saints

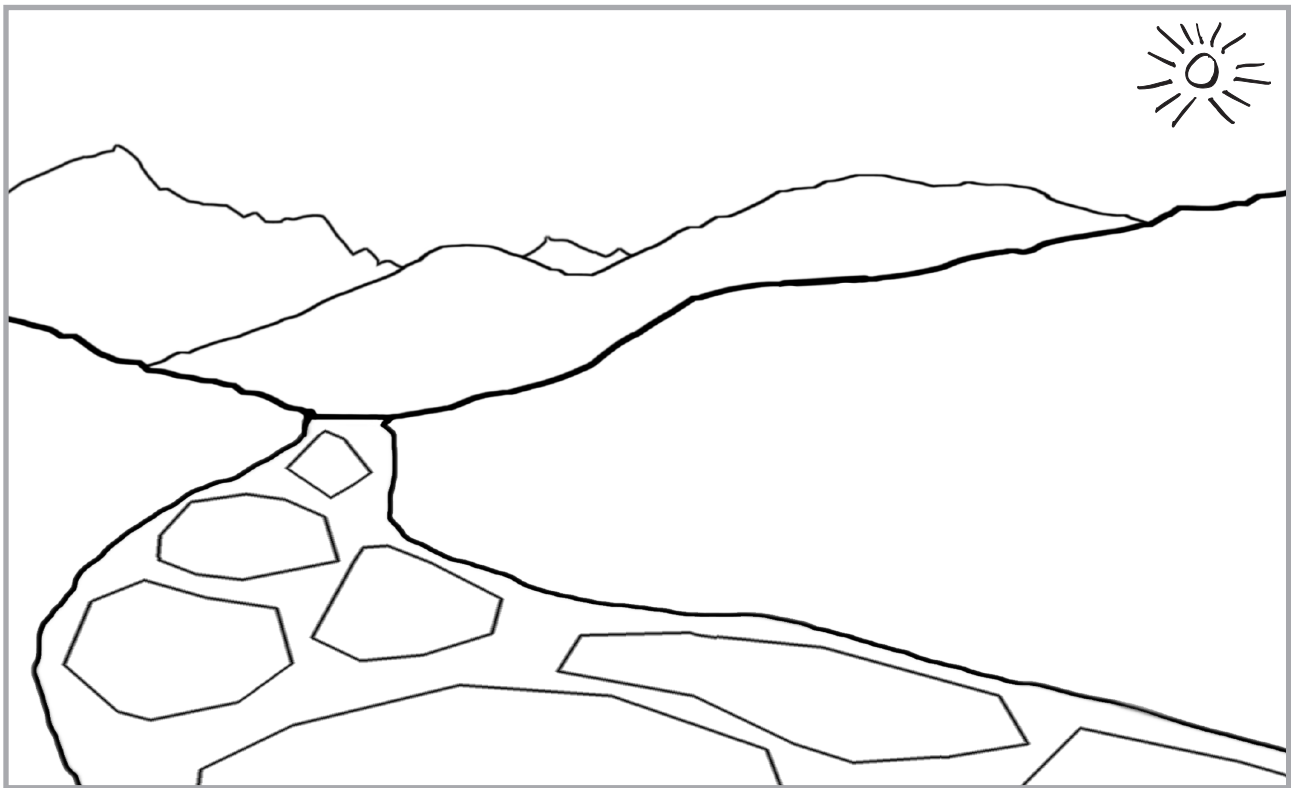
Name _____

Blessed Sebastian of Aparicio

Sebastian lived his life helping other people. As a young boy he did many different types of jobs to help his family. When he was older, he moved to Mexico and continued to do work that helped other people. Sebastian became very rich, but he lived very simply and gave most of his money to the poor.

Sebastian built roads in Mexico. These roads helped connect towns and made it easier for farmers to trade their goods.

Like Sebastian, we can help others, too. Each day, find one way to help someone else. After you have done this, color in one stone on the road.



*Dear God,
Each day of this week, let me give help to others who are in need.
Amen.*