

All Saints' Eve Storybook

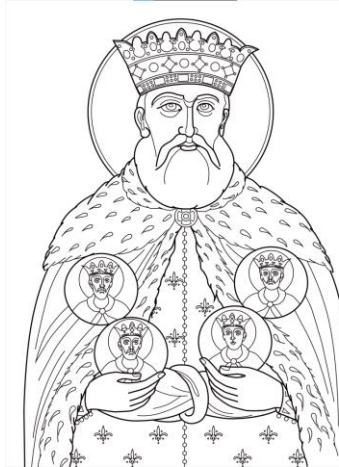
Who will be the next . . .

2020



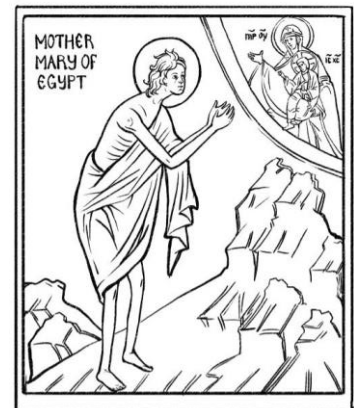
**Sts. Cyril and
Methodius**

2021



**St. Constantin
Brâncoveanu**

2022



**St. Mary
of Egypt**

Saint of the Year?

2023



What is a saint? A “holy one”, someone who knows they belong to God and who lives that way. An old-fashioned word for holy is someone who is “hallowed”. We still use the word *hallowed* when we pray the Lord’s Prayer every day — “Hallowed be Thy name” — which means we confess the Name of God to be kept sacred and holy.

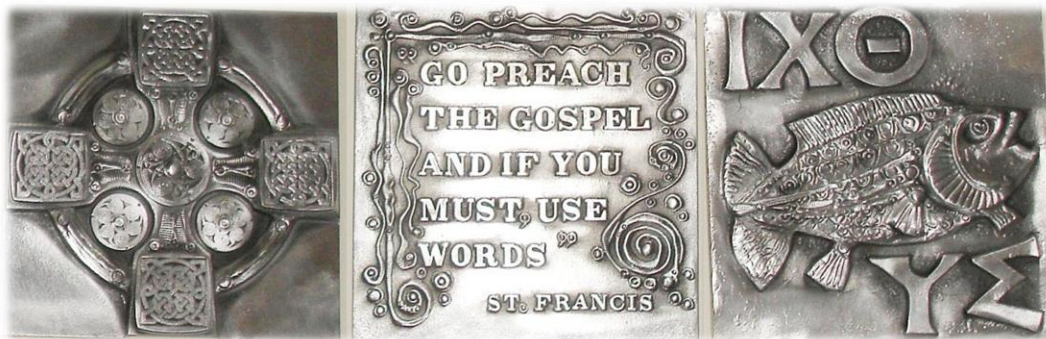
Our All Saints’ Eve book was created to help us celebrate the Feast of All Saints, which is observed by Christians in the western churches on November 1. (In the Orthodox Church we observe the Feast of All Saints every year on the Sunday after Pentecost with a Divine Liturgy on that day). Because “hallow” means “holy” the western Feast of All Saints (or Holy Ones) was also called All Hallows. The night before, October 31, became known as All Hallows Evening, or Halloween. You’ve heard that word before.

You probably think of Halloween as a time when children dress up in all sorts of costumes, some of them scary, but the name *Halloween* is really a Christian name for the evening of All Saints. So, we thought it would be a great time for us Christians to dress up like saints! It makes sense, doesn’t it?

It is important for us to always remember the saints. They show us what it is like to follow Jesus our Savior. Some of them were put to death because they were Christians; others preached the gospel in foreign lands; others devoted their lives to prayer, to confession, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and showing mercy.

We hope you will enjoy reading the stories in this book and remembering the saints. You probably have a saint’s name yourself. Do you know the story of your saint? This would be a great time to find out more. Let Jesus inspire you to serve and obey him like the thousands of saints who have lived before us. Let’s all pray together and help each other to become more and more like the saints!

Special thanks this year to authors/artists: Rasheeri and Ania Obah, Maggie and Susannah Kishler, Aisha Pulido, Sofia, Rebekah and Lydia Abraham, Robert Hopper, Joseph Letendre, Alina Stoenescu, Eva Walter and Katie Walter. We really appreciate everyone’s wonderful efforts!



St. Christopher of Lycia

with the Martyrs Callinika and Aquilina

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Before finding the comfort of God, Christopher of Lycia had set out as a vigorous man seeking to serve the world's mightiest King. He was born in the reign of the Roman emperor Decius, who was a horrid persecutor of Christians in that time.

Christopher, who at the time bore the name Reprebus, was known as a giant of a man and never failed to be admired for his handsome features. He entered the court of a certain local king that appeared invincible in many respects, and served him faithfully. It was one day that he observed this king making the sign of the cross at the mention of the devil. Christopher questioned the king as to why he thought this gesture necessary. The king responded by expressing his fear of the devil's evil powers and how he sought to ward them off.

At discovering that this exceedingly mighty king feared the powers of another, Christopher abandoned his services and sought to become the servant of Satan, who was unmistakably of a higher dominance. No sooner had he found the devil did he perceive that he too feared someone else of more authority and power. Christopher deserted Satan and attempted to find this man with the name of Jesus Christ, however, he found it very difficult.

He received advice from a wise hermit named Saint Babylus of Antioch who suggested he move near a river and offer to carry travelers across, as his strength would fit quite amiably in such labor. Christopher acted on this, helping many travelers until one night, when the weather proved unfriendly, a Child called to him, asking to be taken over the river. Christopher ungrudgingly placed the Child on his head. He took a step and felt the Child become heavier, and another step feeling more weight; another and another, all of the weight added up into an overwhelming burden. He used his staff for support, but they were not halfway through the river when Christopher believed his strength might fail him and that he and Child would drown in the rushing waters. With every muscle working within him, he tore through the river with the Child's weight on his shoulders and pulled himself ashore.

There, the Child said that Christopher had just carried all the world's sins upon his shoulders and commanded him to plant his staff in the ground, which it quickly sprouted into a glorious tree. Christopher immediately stumbled humbly into worship at recognizing the Child as Jesus Christ. Hence Christopher means "Christ-bearer" because he carried Christ upon his shoulders.

Christopher now adopted the life of a Christian. It is said that because he desired to be modest and veer away from sin, he asked God to make his handsome face unappealing, which the Lord granted to him. He performed a multitude of miracles that inspired many others, including the Roman soldiers sent to capture him for persecution.

He was eventually found out by the emperor Decius and summoned to his abode. There, the emperor first attempted to convince Christopher to renounce Christ through the words of two women. Instead of making him renounce his faith, the women became intrigued by it and converted. They were then beaten and became the two martyrs, Saints Callinika and Aquilina. After Decius' first attempt failed, he threw Christopher into a metal box that glowed red with heat. After some time of waiting, they opened it and were awestruck as Christopher stepped out, his muscular body was unscathed by the fatal hot box he had just emerged from. He endured many other brutalities that were inflicted upon until the day he was beheaded and rose to the name of martyrdom in about the year 250.

After a long adventure of searching for the world's most powerful king, Christopher of Lycia was embraced by the Lord Almighty, with all his love, into the Kingdom of Heaven. His feast day falls on the springtime of May 9 and he is remembered as the patron saint of travelers. ~ *R.M.C Obah*

St. Panteleimon

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St. Panteleimon was born to a Christian mother and a pagan father, under the name of Pantoleon. His mother was Saint Eubola, and she wanted to raise him as a Christian as well, but she died when Pantoleon was just old enough to go to school. His father Eustorgius sent him to medical school in Nicomedia to become a physician.

While Pantoleon was there, the three hieromartyers Hermolaus, Hermippus, and Hermocrates were also living there at the time - three of the only survivors from the massacre of Christians that Emperor Maximian had ordered. They invited Pantoleon over to their house and talked about Christianity with him. He didn't convert until he encountered a dead child on the road that had suffered from a venomous snake bite, who he prayed over until the child sat up and the snake immediately fell dead. After that he was baptized by Saint Hermolaus and chose the name Panteleimon, which means "all-merciful".

Saint Panteleimon's father also converted and became baptized after seeing his son restore a blind man's sight. After Eustorgius died, Saint Panteleimon went out and continued to heal and help people without asking for pay. In fact, he successfully healed so many people that everyone came to him, and the other physicians were annoyed.

The physicians told Emperor Maximian about it and had Saint Panteleimon brought to him. Maximian said that he would be pardoned if he offered sacrifices up to idols of their gods. Saint Panteleimon responded that he was a Christian and couldn't do that. After that, he healed a paralyzed man in the name of Jesus Christ when the emperor's own physicians couldn't. Furious, Maximian sentenced him to death, but it took a lot of tries for them to even harm Saint Panteleimon. They tied him to a tree and threw rocks at him, they burned him with fire, they threw him into a pot of extremely hot tar, etc. etc. The emperor even brought him to a circus and tried to set wild beasts on the saint in the hopes they would kill him. Instead, all the animals suddenly became tame and started licking the saint's feet, and the audience cheered for Saint Panteleimon.

Finally, the emperor ordered the saint to be tied to an olive tree and beheaded. Saint Panteleimon prayed, and the sword miraculously became as soft as wax and didn't harm him at all. As he finished his prayer, a Voice came from the sky and summoned him to the heavens and the soldiers who had been sentenced to kill him fell to their knees and repented immediately. They refused to execute him, but Saint Panteleimon told him that they must, or they wouldn't be with him in the next life.

When they beheaded him, the olive tree burst forth with fruit. We remember Saint Panteleimon on July 27, and he is the patron saint of healing and medicine.

Panteleimon, saintly champion and healer,

intercede with our merciful God to grant our souls remission of sins.

~ Apolytikion (Tone 3)

~Maggie Kishler

St. Stylianos

500



Born around the 6th century AD, in Paphlagonia (modern day Turkey), Saint Stylianos is known as the protector and patron saint of children. From a very early age, young Stylianos had a heart so pure, and was so sensitive, that he was able to see what was important to God over what was important to the world. When his parents died, they left him a fortune large enough to live the rest of his life in luxury. However, because he knew that living a life filled with material things was not pleasing to God, Saint Stylianos gave the money away to the poor, as they needed it. After doing so, he felt a great sense of relief and was able to freely devote his life to serving Christ. He moved into a monastery and began his life as a monastic.

Saint Stylianos had three goals as a monk: To live in poverty, chastity, and obedience. He vowed to stay pure in flesh and in spirit; and was strict with himself, seeking to cleanse himself from every worldly thought. In the monastery, his obedience became an example to monks of all ages.

It soon became quite obvious that Saint Stylianos had a special gift. His vigils were intense with the Spirit. He also carried with him an incredible sense of joyfulness and love that had been with him since childhood. It is said that some monks were even a bit jealous of him. Saint Stylianos eventually left the monastery. He moved into a cave in the desert to live as an ascetic.

In the desert, Saint Stylianos spent his days in amazement, reflecting on the glory of God's creation. He kept his focus on pleasing the Lord, cleansing his soul, and asking the Lord for guidance in helping others. He fasted and prayed continually. He also maintained his pure heart and joyful countenance, allowing Christ to live within him. Upon praying to the Lord, one evening, he felt God's presence, and an even greater sense of serenity came upon him.

People visited Saint Stylianos in the desert seeking help for their sorrow and sickness. He comforted and made them calm. And through his prayers, they were healed of physical and mental ailments alike. The saint was sure to remind all to keep their hearts as pure as little children, in order to be saved.

Saint Stylianos loved children and believed they were living angels of the Lord. One day, as he reached out to touch a sick child, he felt the power of the Lord come through his hand and the child was restored. Parents with ailing children came from all around. He would pray to the Lord with tears, and the children of those who believed in Christ would be healed. Couples that were unable to bear children would ask for his prayers and be able to conceive.

When Saint Stylianos fell asleep in the Lord, his face shone so radiantly that it lit up the room.

After his passing, during an epidemic in Paphlagonia, people would paint icons of the saint to hang over beds of sick children, and those children would recover. Many still ask for his intercessions, and receive healing of mind, body and spirit. Churches all over the world have been dedicated to Saint Stylianos. He is commemorated by the Orthodox Church on November 26th.

~ Aisha Pulido

St. Sophia of Thrace

700

St.
Sophia
of
Thrace



St. Sophia was born into a rich Christian family in Ainos, southeast Thrace. She had a wonderful childhood in which she learned to love God. When she came of age she married a wealthy man, and together they had six children.

Throughout that phase of her life, she never stopped loving God. Sadly though, sickness swept through their town killing Sophia's husband and all six of her children. Although she could have despaired, because of her love of God she persevered, and instead, she took to ministry. Over the course of the next twenty years, she adopted over one hundred orphans. She also used her property and money to house and provide for the poor and homeless.

In her life, Saint Sophia had the honor of experiencing a wondrous miracle of God in her own home. In her home, there was a wine jug which she saved for only those in need. No matter how much wine she poured, the jug would never run out of wine. Sophia was amazed at the wonders that God could do. Throughout the rest of her life, she never told anyone of this miracle. When she was 55, she finally told someone of the miracle, and the priest that she told insisted that because of this miracle, she should become a nun. She did. A year later she passed away; a few years after that she was honored as a saint.

Sophia was a righteous and wealthy wife and mother. She attended church faithfully and taught her children to do the same. She is a great role model to woman who one day hope to become mothers. Although she faced tragedy and undeniable heartache, she kept her faith and used it to help orphans and widows in need.

The wondrous Saint Sophia is commemorated on June 4. It is because of God's favor that she was granted sainthood. She is known as the Mother of Orphans and is remembered as one to possess God's Favor.

~Lydia Abraham

St. Phanourios

Before 1500



St. Phanourios has been reverently and righteously revered for more than five hundred years. The discovery of his first icon was made by nomadic pagans, who uncovered it in some old ruins on the outskirts of Rhodes around 1500. There were countless other icons and artifacts in the ruins, but they were all severely damaged except Phanourios’.

Because the Arabs found absolutely no value in it, they distractedly discarded the icon. Monks waiting in the rocks nearby saw them discard it, and when the Arabs left, they scrambled out of the rocks and recovered the icon. One of the monks saw lettering on the icon and figured out that it said Phanourios. There were also twelve frames near the icon, it was twelve scenes of Phanourios accepting torture and revealing that he was a martyr.

The monks rushed back into the ruins to see if any of the other artifacts were as spotless as Phanourios’, but to no avail. The remaining icons were quite ancient and indistinct. They resolutely resolved to research for many years after but did not uncover any new information.

The horrors which were shown in the scenes of him being tortured made them believe that he was an indestructible instrument of God. The prominent Archbishop Milos of Rhodes settled that Phanourios was a man of grace, and he was proclaimed a Saint.

Phanourios was ordained as the Patron Saint of lost things. Phanourios’ name is invoked when people pray for help in revealing lost or hidden spiritual matters of the heart or finding objects. Tradition holds that when the prayers are answered, they bake a sweet bread, called Phanouropita, and share it.

He is commemorated on August 27th, because that was the date that the monks recovered the icon.

~ *Rebekah Abraham*

St. Sophrony

1993



St. Sophrony was best known as the disciple and biographer of St Silouan the Athonite and compiler of St Silouan's works, and as the founder of the Patriarchal Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Tolleshunt Knights, Maldon, Essex, England.

On September 23, 1896, Sergei Symeonovich Sakharov was born to Orthodox parents in Russia. As a child, Sergei would pray daily, later recalling that he would pray for 45 minutes without stress. Even as a child, Sergei experienced the Uncreated Light. He read widely, including such Russian greats as Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Pushkin.

Due to great artistic talent, Sergei studied at the Academy of Arts between 1915 and 1917 and then at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture between 1920 and 1921. From 1922 Sergei's works were exhibited in Paris, attracting the attention of the French media.

On Holy and Great Saturday of 1924, he returned to Christianity. He experienced the Uncreated Light in a strength unmatched to the end of his life and, as a result, distanced himself from his artwork. Sergei then became among the first students of the St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris, but in 1925, finding formal theological study to be inherently unfulfilling, Sergei left the Institute and Paris to become a monk on Mount Athos.

Sergei arrived at Mt Athos in 1926, where he entered the Russian Orthodox Monastery of St. Panteleimon with the intent of learning how to pray and to have the right attitude towards God. He was tonsured with the name of Sophrony. In 1930, Fr Sophrony was ordained to the diaconate by St Nicolai (Velimirovic) of Zicha, and he became a disciple of St Silouan the Athonite, who would prove to be Fr Sophrony's greatest and life-long influence. St Silouan had no formal system of theology, being largely uneducated, but his life exuded theology.

On 24 September 1938, St. Silouan reposed in the Lord. Following his spiritual father's instructions, Father Sophrony left the monastery grounds to reside in the Athonite desert: first at Karoulia, then at a cave near St Paul's Monastery. His residence in this desert lasted World War II's duration, 1939-1945, and it proved to be a time of such intense prayer that Father Sophrony's health was affected. This taught him the interdependence of all humanity. In 1941, Elder Sophrony was ordained to the priesthood. He became a spiritual father to many Athonite monks.

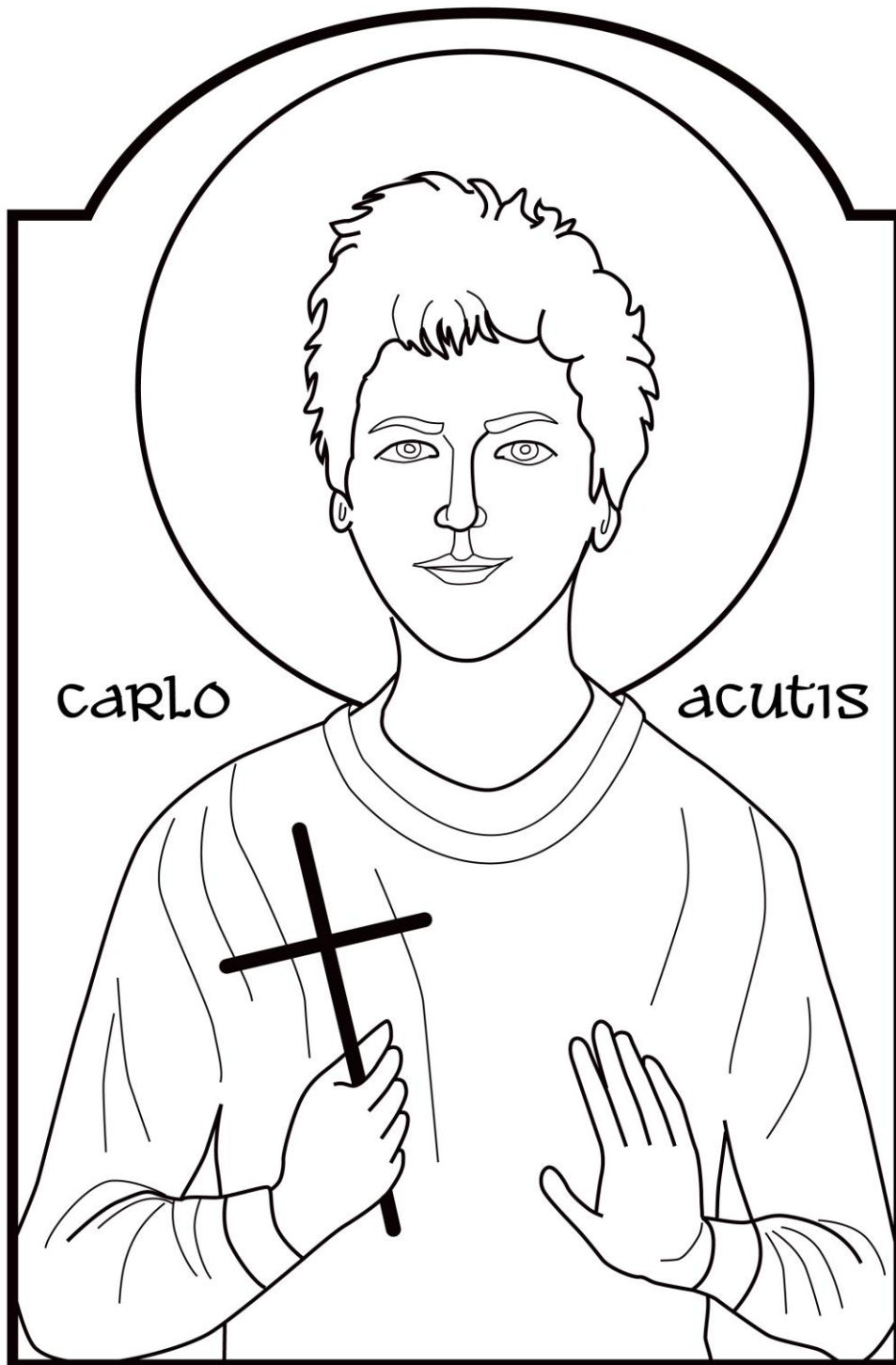
By 1958, Elder Sophrony had a number of people living near him, seeking the monastic life. A property at Tolleshunt Knights, Maldon, Essex, England was inspected, and the next year the Community of St John the Baptist was formed at this site, under the omophorion of Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh. The monastery had both monks and nuns, something that has continued to the present, and originally had six members.

The monastery had been informed that the only way that it could bury people on its property was to build an underground crypt, which it proceeded to build, and to which Elder Sophrony said that he would not repose until the crypt was ready. Then, having been told of the expected completion date of July 12, 1993, Elder Sophrony stated that he "would be ready". On the 11th, Elder Sophrony reposed; and on the 14th was his funeral and burial, attended by monastics from around the world.

“On Prayer”, a book containing Elder Sophrony's writings on prayer, particularly the Jesus Prayer, was published posthumously. On November 27, 2019, the Ecumenical Patriarchate proclaimed the glorification of Elder Sophrony as a saint of the Orthodox Church ~ *Robert Hopper (Silouan)*

Bd. Carlos Acutis

2006



When we imagine a saint, we usually think of someone who lived long ago and wore long robes. If it's a man, we think of someone with a white beard; if it's a woman, we picture her wearing a veil. But Blessed Carlo Acutis, one of the Catholic Church's newest saints, looked nothing like this. He carried a backpack and wore Adidas.

Carlo was born in London on May 3, 1991, and his family moved to Italy while he was still a baby. During his short life (he died in 2006 at the age of 15) he earned average grades in school and loved playing soccer and his PlayStation video games. He taught himself the saxophone and learned to code. But more than anything else, he loved our Lord Jesus Christ.

If Carlo had a favorite verse in the gospels, it would have been John 6:54: "*Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.*" For him, receiving Jesus's Body and Blood in Holy Communion was the most important part of his life. "*Through this sacrament,*" he said, "*the Lord makes us be complete persons, created in his image.*"

It amazed him to see "*throng*s of people stand in long lines to buy tickets to rock concerts or soccer matches, but I don't see crowds of people lined up outside church waiting to see Jesus in the Eucharist."

His love for Christ helped him love people and nature. Once, he took some money he had been given to buy video games and used it to buy a sleeping bag for a homeless person instead. In parks and on the beach, he would pick up litter people had thoughtlessly dropped. He was always bringing home stray animals he had rescued.

His friends called him a "*computer geek.*" They were right. The priests where he lived asked him to create websites for their parishes. In 2006, he won an award for a website he created to promote volunteer work.

Soon after this, he became very sick. The doctors' diagnosis was a type of leukemia that would quickly take his life. He faced this with great faith and courage, noting that "*There are a lot of people suffering a lot more than me.*"

He spent the last weeks of his life in hospitals. His last words to his mother were: "*Mom, don't be afraid. Since Jesus has become a man, death has become the passage towards life, and we don't need to flee it. Let us prepare ourselves to experience something extraordinary in the eternal life.*"

He died on October 12. At his funeral, a woman was healed from cancer. After several other miraculous healings occurred through his intercessions, the Catholic Church recognized his holiness and began the process of declaring him a saint. Until that day comes, he is now prayed to as Blessed Carlo Acutis.

~ Joseph Letendre

Find the Saints

There are 7 saints nominated in this story booklet. You can find their names in the grid below. Names can go down, across, and in two diagonals, both forwards and backwards.

C	H	R	I	S	T	O	P	H	E	R	S	S	M	A
Y	H	N	M	C	A	L	S	Z	A	O	T	F	T	F
G	N	K	R	K	K	B	Y	I	P	P	Y	W	S	O
P	O	O	B	Z	T	K	H	H	L	L	L	I	I	L
Y	A	W	R	K	B	J	I	E	O	I	I	Z	F	R
D	C	N	A	H	P	A	M	R	Y	L	A	S	W	A
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B	B	O	O	O	C	Y	W	Q	O	R	T	Y	W	G
D	G	W	O	I	O	X	N	X	N	N	S	O	A	L
S	O	I	R	U	O	N	A	H	P	P	I	J	W	Q

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