

VOLUME TWO

SAINTS

for
Young
Readers
for Every
Day

JULY-DECEMBER



REVISED, WITH NEW STORIES!

SAINTS

for Young Readers
for Every Day

Third Edition

VOLUME 2
July–December

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Dedication

I dedicate this volume of *Saints for Young Readers for Every Day* to my parents, Helen and Leo Wallace, who introduced me as a child to the saints. They told me the stories of their lives and gave me books of saints to read and cherish. Both my parents are now deceased, and I treasure their memory. To Mom and Dad, and all the parents like my parents, who gave more than physical life to their children, may this book be a small tribute.

— *Susan Helen Wallace, FSP*

How to Use This Book

This book is the second volume of a two-part set. Volume 1 covers January through June. Volume 2 covers July through December. You will find stories about lots of saints. Some lived long lives; others died when they were young. Some were close to God from their childhood and teenage years. Others learned the hard way that only God can make us happy.

In these pages you will meet saints from every nation and race. They are from different centuries, starting with the early days of the Church right down to our own times. You'll come to know saintly kings and laborers, queens and housemaids, popes and priests, nuns and religious brothers. They were mothers and fathers, teenagers and children. They were doctors and farmers, soldiers and lawyers.

Saints are not just one type of person. They were as different from each other as we are. They were as human as we are. They lived on this earth, experienced temptations, and faced problems. They became saints because they used their willpower to make right choices and they prayed. They tried to correct their faults and they never gave up trusting in Jesus' love for them.

What's the best way to read this book? Don't try to read all the stories in a few days. Read them one

day at a time. The saint for the day is from the current Church calendar (called the Roman Calendar). When this calendar does not present a saint on a certain day, we have chosen one that we thought you might appreciate learning about.

You might ask, “What’s the difference between a SAINT and a BLESSED?” Saints are holy persons now in heaven who grew close to God while on earth. The Church declares them saints so that we can love, imitate, and pray to them. Saints can pray to God for us and help us. Persons declared BLESSED are holy people who are now in heaven. Usually the Church requires miracles obtained through their intervention. When the miracles have been carefully studied and accepted as real, the blessed are proclaimed saints. You will also meet MARTYRS in this book. Martyrs allowed themselves to be put to death rather than deny God or give up their Catholic faith.

A good way to use this book is to read the saint story for the day either before or after you say your morning or evening prayers. In this way, you’ll be able to think about what you read during the day and try practicing the suggestion at the end of that day’s story. (You might also want to read more biographies of the saints you especially liked.)

If you read a story a day, you’ll have made many new friends in heaven by the end of the year. And they’ll be more than happy to help you become closer to God!

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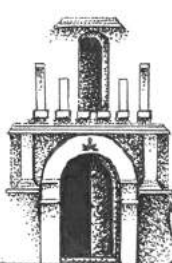
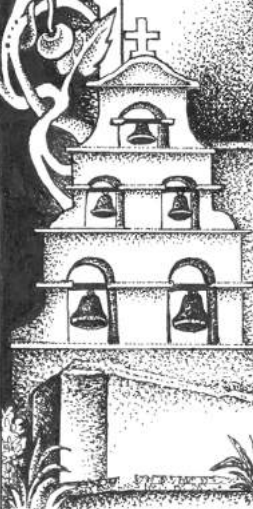
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Junipero

Castro
Cerra



JULY

July 1



Blessed Junípero Serra

Junípero Serra was born in Petra, on the island of Mallorca, Spain, on November 24, 1713. The boy became a student at the Franciscan school in Palma, twenty-five miles away. He joined the Franciscan Order on September 14, 1730, a few months before his seventeenth birthday. During his novitiate, Junípero read a biography of Franciscan saints. The saint whose life captivated him most was St. Francis Solano, who had lived from 1549 until 1610. This missionary priest to South America had just been declared a saint in 1726 by Pope Benedict XIII. The young novice decided that, if it were God's will, he, too, would be a missionary.

Junípero was ordained a priest in 1736. He became a professor of philosophy. After he had been in the Order twenty years, he was given a wonderful opportunity. Franciscan friars were asked to volunteer for the mission territories called "New Spain" (now Mexico and California). Junípero and his close friend, Friar Francisco Palou, joined the missionary band at Cadiz, Spain, a seaport city. From there they

sailed the Atlantic Ocean to Vera Cruz, Mexico. They landed on December 6, 1749. Junípero and another friar walked the next part of the journey from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, a distance of 240 miles. They began on December 15, 1749, and arrived on January 1, 1750. From Mexico City, Junípero and Friar Francisco Palou were sent to work among the Pame Indians at the Franciscan Mission of the Sierra Gorda.

Several of the friars were then assigned to missions in Lower California. Junípero, Francisco, and a handful of other Franciscans were asked to bring the Gospel to the native peoples in Upper California. Junípero started Mission San Diego on July 16, 1769, when he was fifty-six years old. The mission was an open invitation to his beloved people to come and meet Jesus. Gradually, they trusted the friars. Some people were baptized and began to live the Christian faith. Father Serra and the friars loved and protected their people. The chain of new missions grew: Mission San Carlos in Monterey on June 1, 1770; Mission San Antonio de Padua on July 14, 1771; Mission San Gabriel Archangel, September 8, 1771; Mission San Luis Obispo, September 1, 1772; Mission San Francisco de Asis, October 9, 1776; Mission San Juan Capistrano, November 1, 1776; Mission Santa Clara de Asis, January 12, 1777; Mission San Buenaventura, March 31, 1782. Eventually, 6,000 native peoples were baptized.

Blessed Junípero made his final tour of the missions in Upper California from the last part of 1783 until July of 1784. He died peacefully at Mission San

Carlos on August 28, 1784, and is buried there. In 1988 Pope John Paul II declared Father Junípero Serra blessed.

Our world can become very small when we're wrapped up in ourselves. We can ask Blessed Junípero Serra to teach us to be compassionate and concerned for others. This will lead us to reach out to others in need, in the spirit of the Gospel.

July 2



St. Oliver Plunket

Oliver Plunket was born in Ireland on November 1, 1629. He attended school at St. Mary's Benedictine Abbey in Dublin. When he was sixteen years old he went to Rome to continue his studies and prepare for the priesthood.

He was ordained in 1654 and remained in Rome for fifteen years as a professor of theology. He was also named the Procurator for the Irish bishops. In 1669, he became archbishop of Armagh and the Primate of All Ireland.

At this time, England's king, Charles II, was trying to stabilize the Anglican Church in England, Scotland, and Ireland. He did this by trying to do away with other religions, including the Catholic Church. Archbishop Plunket returned to Ireland in disguise. He wore civilian clothes and called himself Captain Brown.

By May, 1670, the persecution of Catholics eased up, and Archbishop Plunket was able to work throughout his diocese without a disguise. Over the next three years he confirmed about 10,000 Catholics, reorganized his diocese, ordained new priests, and opened new schools.

But in 1673 the persecution of Catholics was renewed. Oliver Plunket was forced into hiding. In 1678, a man named Titus Oates reported that the Catholics were planning to murder the king and place his Catholic brother on the throne. It was later found out that Oates made the whole thing up, and he was imprisoned for perjury (lying under oath). In the meantime, Catholic bishops and priests were ordered to leave Ireland.

Oliver Plunket was arrested on December 6, 1679, and sentenced to nine months of solitary confinement in London. In an unfair trial, he was convicted of high treason. He was hanged on July 1 at Tyburn, the last Catholic to be martyred in England.

Oliver Plunket was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1975.

We should pray for our Church leaders, that they'll have the courage and zeal to serve the people entrusted to them, even in the face of danger and difficulty. We should also pray that they'll be consoled and helped by the faithful support of their people.

July 3



St. Thomas the Apostle

Thomas was one of the twelve apostles of Jesus. In the Syriac language his name means “twin.” Once when Jesus was going to face the danger of being killed, the other apostles tried to keep the Master back. St. Thomas said to them, “Let us also go, that we may die with him” (Jn 11:16).

When Jesus was captured by his enemies, Thomas lost his courage. He ran away with the other apostles. His heart was broken with sorrow at the death of his beloved Lord. Then on Easter Sunday, Jesus appeared to his apostles after he had risen from the dead. He showed them the wounds in his hands and side. Thomas was not with them at the time. As soon as he arrived, the other apostles told him joyfully, “We have seen the Lord.” They thought Thomas would be happy. Instead, he did not believe their message. He hadn’t seen Jesus as they had.

“Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails,” he said, “and put my finger into the nailmarks, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.” Eight days later, Jesus appeared to his apostles again. This time, Thomas was there, too. Christ called him and told him to touch his hands and the wound in his side. Thomas fell down at the Master’s feet and cried out, “My Lord and my God!” Then Jesus said, “Because you

have seen me, Thomas, you have believed. Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." You will find this story in the Gospel of John, chapter 20, verses 24-29.

After Pentecost, Thomas was strong and firm in his belief and trust in Jesus. It is said that he went to India to preach the Gospel. He died a martyr there, after proclaiming the Good News of Jesus to many people.

We often hear of St. Thomas referred to as the "doubter." But the moment he saw the Risen Christ he made an unwavering act of faith. When the priest lifts the sacred Host at Mass, we too can pray the words of St. Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

July 4



St. Elizabeth of Portugal

Elizabeth, a Spanish princess, was born in 1271. She was named after her aunt, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, whose feast day is November 17. She married King Denis of Portugal at the age of twelve. (For political reasons, in those days it was not uncommon for important marriages to be arranged involving very young people, even children.) Elizabeth was beautiful and very lovable. She was also devout and went to Mass every day. Elizabeth's husband was

fond of her at first, but soon he began to cause her great suffering. Though a good ruler, he did not have his wife's love of prayer and virtue. In fact, his sins of impurity were well-known scandals throughout his kingdom.

St. Elizabeth tried to be a loving mother to her children, Alphonso and Constance. She was also generous and loving with the people of Portugal. Even though her husband was unfaithful, she prayed that he would have a change of heart. Elizabeth refused to become bitter and resentful. Gradually, the king was moved by her patience and good example. He began to live a better life. He apologized to his wife and showed her greater respect. In his last sickness the queen never left his side, except for Mass. King Denis died on January 6, 1325. He had shown deep sorrow for his sins and his death was peaceful.

Elizabeth lived eleven more years. She joined the Franciscan Third Order and performed loving acts of charity and penance. She was a wonderful model of kindness toward the poor. This gentle woman was also a peacemaker between members of her own family and between nations.

St. Elizabeth of Portugal died on July 4, 1336. She was proclaimed a saint by Pope Urban VIII in 1626.

St. Elizabeth found the strength for daily living each morning at Mass. We can ask her to help us appreciate the great treasure of the Mass, participating in it with attention and devotion.