

St. Anthony



a great deal to Ireland — a new set of morals and learning," said Patrick, from St. Mary's Church in Bath.

Patrick is also intrigued by the life of St. Augustine, who led a promiscuous lifestyle as a young adult but wrote hundreds of books and letters in the late third century and early fourth century that helped develop Christian theology.

"He became one of the greatest saints we ever had, due to his defining theology for the church," Patrick said.

Brian Leavy, whose middle and confirmation names are Anthony and Peter, said he prays to both saints daily. From studying St. Anthony of Padua, he has learned that Anthony "was a Franciscan monk and the infant Jesus appeared to him, and that he was a great orator."

Brian noted that several saints, including Augustine and Paul, underwent dramatic conversions.

"I always think it's amazing how they'd be so bad, and they would convert and bring Christianity to the world," said Brian, 14, from St. Thomas the Apostle.

According to John, Brian and Patrick, the human dimensions of these saints are what make them so intriguing.

"They were alive and might have gone through some of the same stuff we did," John said.

"They were actual human beings, not just fictional characters in a story-book," Brian said.

"I can connect better because they're 100 percent people," Patrick said.

For teens who don't know much about saints, John suggested some good starting activities:

"Find out why (teens are) named what they are and what those saints have done; (which saints) their churches are named after; and what the patron saints are for different causes," John said.

Saints Alive!

Popular interest in saints is experiencing a comeback, said David Higbee, religious-education director at St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Irondequoit.

Higbee said he has observed a rise in demand for books and videos about saints over the last five or six years. He ventured that the popular television show "Touched By An Angel" might be playing a key role in sparking this wave.

"I think people are looking for that human touch that's supernatural — which means an angel or a saint," Higbee said.

However, Higbee added, overall promotion of devotion to saints is not as evident in the modern Catholic Church as in past generations.

"I haven't noticed that it's as strong," Higbee said. About half the youths in his parish, Higbee estimated, "have a relatively lively interest in some of these stories. And half have very little knowledge."

Higbee encourages teens to explore the lives of saints because they might find this path more captivating than other forms of Catholic education.

"These stories can be exceptionally engaging," he commented. "(But) the theology texts can read like a legal document."



St. Patrick

Patron Saints

Did you know that there are patron saints for television (St. Clare), tent makers (St. Paul), journalists (St. Francis de Sales), headaches (St. Teresa of Avila) and cattle (St. Cornelius)?

Here are several patron saints with potential connections to the teen set, along with their annual feast dates:

- Athletes —** Sebastian (Jan. 20)
- Musicians —** Cecilia (Nov. 22), Gregory the Great (Sept. 3), Paul (June 29)
- Artists —** Luke (Oct. 18), Michael (Sept. 29)
- Boy Scouts —** George (April 23)
- Children —** Nicholas of Myra (Dec. 6); Pancras (May 12)
- Family —** Joseph (March 19)
- Learning —** Ambrose (Dec. 7)

- Schools —** Thomas Aquinas (Jan 28)
- Students —** Thomas Aquinas (Jan. 28), Jerome (Sept. 30)
- Vocations —** Alphonsus (Aug. 1)
- Workers —** Joseph (May 1)
- Young girls —** Agnes (Jan. 21)
- Youth —** Aloysius Gonzaga (June 21)
- Schoolboys —** Benedict (July 11), Lawrence (Aug. 10)



St. Bernadette

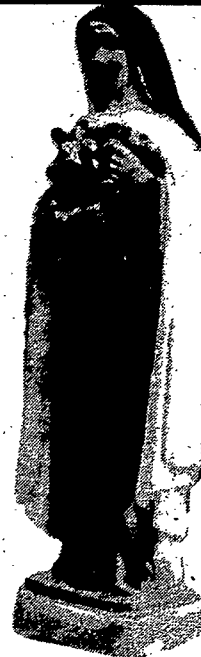
THE 11:15 A.M. ALL SAINTS DAY MASS AT ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH WILL HAVE A CREATIVE SAINT THEME.

According to Sister Lucille Nalbhone, MPF, eight teens from the Rochester parish will honor various saints by wearing costumes and acting out the saints' lives. They will perform during the homily part of the Nov. 1 Mass.

Among the saints to be included are St. Francis of Assisi, St. Clare, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and St. Bridget. The final saint to be highlighted will be Edith Stein, who was just canonized St. Teresa Benedicta by Pope John Paul II on Oct. 11.

As a colorful ending to the liturgy at St. Andrew's, a set of 200 balloons will be released over the city of Rochester. Each balloon, Sister Nalbhone said, will have a beatitude written on it.

"We can hopefully spread the good news. I hope that they land in the right back yards," said Sister Nalbhone, religious-education director at St. Andrew's.



St. Teresa

COMING NEXT WEEK: Spectators at sporting events

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