

Saints



Alive!

NOVEMBER 2011
Our Lady of Lourdes
Religious Education
Brochure

The beginning of the last month in the liturgical calendar year brings with it the Feast of All Saints and the Feast of All Souls. What better time to learn more about the heroes of our faith than now? These holy men and women serve to enlighten and guide us on our own journeys towards becoming more Cristo-centric (Christ-centered) and Christ-like.

Did you know?

Relics, including the physical remains and objects sanctified by touching the body of a saint or blessed, have been venerated throughout the history of the Church. In fact, the use of relics is mentioned in both Old Testament and New Testament scripture. Relics are typically housed in special boxes, lockets, or glass cases called reliquaries.

Veneration of relics should not be confused with adoration, which is reserved for Jesus; instead, when the faithful venerate the saints or their relics, they look beyond the visible and permit God to enter their hearts through the intercession of the saints. When we honor the saints and their relics with a genuine desire to become closer to God, we are better able to adore the Lord, and live as Christ directed. The Catholic Church includes many instances of saints and blessed through whose relics God has continued to perform miracles, even after their deaths.

FEATURED SAINTS:

Feast Day:

St. Martin de Porres

November 3

St. Catherine Labouré

November 28

St. Martin de Porres



This beloved saint from Lima, Peru, was born in 1579 to a Spanish father and a Panamanian freed-woman. His father was unhappy about Martin's dark complexion and eventually left the family; although he did acknowledge Martin and his sister as his children, he did not support the family financially, so the children lived in poverty. As a young boy, Martin was known to spend time in prayer alone with God, some-

times for hours.

When Martin was only 12 years old, he was apprenticed to a barber-surgeon, where he learned both trades, which he put to use the rest of his life. He entered the Rosary Convent of the Friars Preachers at Lima (the Order of St. Dominic) when he was 15. He began his journey there sweeping floors, but eventually became a professed lay-brother. Included in his duties were the distribution of alms to the poor, caring for the sick in the infirmary, and throughout the city, and caring for slaves brought to Peru. He also established an orphanage, a hospital, and several other charitable institutions. His love and kindness extended beyond humans into the animal kingdom, even to rats and mice!

Martin's desire to travel abroad and become a martyr was never realized, but God did grace him with many spiritual gifts, including bilocation and aerial flight. Brother Martin was known to go through locked doors to visit the sick and help the needy. His love and ministry extended through all levels of society, and to all races. He often ministered where others feared to tread. In one such case, Martin

St. Martin de Porres, *continued*

was said to have brought a very sick man covered with sores into his room to lie down. He was reprimanded by his superior for disobedience and exposing others in his order to illness. Brother Martin de Porres showed great wisdom in his response to the reprimand. He told his superior to teach him because he was unaware that the rule of obedience superseded the rule of charity towards one's neighbor.

St. Martin de Porres, for all his wisdom and gifts, remained charitable, humble, and devoted to God, and all his creatures, throughout his life. The first mixed-race saint, who died in 1639, was canonized on May 6, 1962, and is the patron of social justice. He is often pictured with a cat, dog, and mouse, eating from the same dish, as well as with a broom. "Brother Broom," his nickname, believed that one should honor God even in the most menial of tasks, similar to St. Thérèse of Lisieux's adage, "Do small things with great love."

St. Catherine Labouré

St. Catherine Labouré is well-known throughout the world as the saint who brought us the Miraculous Medal, even before the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was made official in Rome. However, during her life, her mission and her visions were unknown to all but her confessor, and were revealed to her superior only 8 months before her death.

Zoé Labouré was born in Burgundy, France in 1806. The 9th of 11 children, Zoé's mother died when she was 9 years old, and she looked to Our Lady as her mother from that point on. While others in her family went to school, Zoé did not as her father, a farmer, relied on her to care for her younger siblings and the household.

At a young age, Zoé felt called to the religious life, but she was not permitted to join the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de



Paul until 1830, when she took the name Catherine. It was soon afterwards, as a celebration honoring the relics of St. Vincent as they were being transferred from Notre-Dame was occurring, that Catherine received the first of a series of visions which would culminate with the creation of the first Miraculous Medals in June of 1832. Our Lady promised special graces to all who would devoutly wear the medal. Even a devout Jew, who reluctantly agreed to wear the medal for a short time, received a vision, experienced conversion, and founded a religious community, Fathers and Daughters of Zion, as a result of Catherine's faith and Our Lady's promise.

St. Catherine Labouré died in 1876, after having lived an "unremarkable" life in the convent. She was canonized in 1947. St. Catherine's humbleness reminds us to seek to glorify God and His Kingdom, not to seek glory for ourselves.

Other November Feast Days

11/1—All Saints

11/2—All Souls

11/4—St. Charles Borromeo

11/11—St. Martin of Tours

11/13—St. Francis Xavier
Cabrini

11/15—St. Albert the Great

11/17— St. Elizabeth of
Hungary

11/18—St. Rose Philippine
Duchesne

11/21—Presentation of Blessed
Virgin Mary

11/22—St. Cecilia

11/30—St. Andrew the Apostle

Prayer on the Front of the Miraculous Medal:

"O Mary, Conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!"