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**by Rev. John Trigilio, PhD, ThD,
and Rev. Kenneth Brighenti, PhD**



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Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Saints For Dummies®

Published by
Wiley Publishing, Inc.
111 River St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774
www.wiley.com

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2009942435

ISBN: 978-0-470-53358-1

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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Dedication

This book is dedicated:

In honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of all saints, whose maternal intercession and guidance helped us throughout the research, writing, and editing of this project.

In honor of St. Joseph, spouse of the Virgin Mary, head of the Holy Family, and patron of the Universal Church, for his paternal protection of ourselves, our families, and our friends.

In honor of St. John Vianney, patron saint of all priests, and St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, whose examples of personal piety, sacerdotal sanctity, and zeal for souls constantly inspires us in our vocation.

To his holiness Pope Benedict XVI, for his saintly leadership as chief shepherd and supreme pastor of the Universal Church.

To the members of the Confraternity of Catholic Clergy, a national association of priests and deacons that seeks to foster ongoing spiritual, theological, and pastoral formation of the ordained in a fraternal environment so as to be better prepared and equipped to serve the needs of the souls entrusted to our care.

To the priests, deacons, seminarians, and faculty of Mount St. Mary Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, for their dedication to forming competent, orthodox, pastoral, and reverent men to serve Holy Mother Church and the people of God.

Acknowledgments

Fathers Brighenti and Trigilio would like to express their deep appreciation and gratitude to the following persons:

Percy and Norma Brighenti (parents); Elizabeth Trigilio (mother); Priscilla Brighenti Collin (sister); Mark Trigilio (brother); Lou and Sandy Falconeri (friends); Keith and Christina Burkhart (friends); Thomas and Bridgette McKenna; Michael Drake; Rev. Fr. Robert Levis, PhD; Rev. Msgr. James Cafone; Rev. Msgr. Steven Rohlfs; Archbishop Edwin O'Brien (Baltimore); Bishop Kevin Rhoades (Harrisburg); and Bishop Paul Bootkoski (Metuchen).

We are also very grateful to Molly Rossiter, Meg Schneider, and Barb Doyen for their invaluable assistance in formatting and editing this book.

And special mention to Mother Angelica of the Poor Clare Nuns in Hanceville, Alabama, and founder of EWTN (Eternal Word Television Network), who often said on her weekly programs, "God calls us all to become great saints. Don't miss the opportunity."

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

Although people view them with reverence and even awe, saints are simply ordinary men and women who, through their faith, overcome common weaknesses, failures, and shortcomings. And even though they're often portrayed as perfect examples of holiness, saints are sinners, just like everyone else. Mother Teresa of Calcutta — likely to be made a saint some time soon — often said that the only difference between a saint and someone who isn't a saint is that the saint never gives up. Perseverance is the key to sainthood.

Real saints are real people. They have real struggles, real temptations, and real problems. Those who are granted sainthood become role models for the rest of us, showing that holiness and sanctity aren't for the few but are available to anyone and everyone. Saints are spiritual heroes who show us that if they can overcome their personal foibles, so can we. This book is about these real people who weren't perfect but who never quit and never gave up trying to do and to be better.

About This Book

Everyone who's in heaven is a saint, so there are far too many to count, let alone name in one book. This book doesn't try to give an exhaustive list of every saint known to man; rather, it provides brief histories of the men and women who lived faith-filled lives worthy of admiration and emulation. We're limited by the data that's available, so most of the saints we examine here are those recognized by the Catholic Church, which has the oldest, most extensive resources on this topic. Other faith traditions — Greek or Russian Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, and other churches — have holy men and women who are considered saints or considered to have lived saintly lives, but unlike the Catholic religion, those churches have no systematic and complete documentation on them. It's merely a matter of better record keeping, as well as the theology and doctrine of the Communion of Saints.

You don't have to be Catholic to appreciate or to be interested in the lives of the saints. Human nature is the same, regardless of what creed one professes. The stories of these brave men and women who fought temptation and persevered in their struggle to become better children of God are something anyone can appreciate.

In this book, we look at most of the popular saints and those whose existence has been verified. Saints who are missing from this book may very well exist and be in heaven, but some may have been only part of the imagination.

Part of the problem is that in the ancient church, there was no real, formal process by which one was named a saint. Some people were declared saints by unanimous consent, or acclamation, while others were named so by the local bishop or council of bishops. It wasn't until the pope took the responsibility for the process that beatification and canonization came to be properly documented.

We cover sainthood both before and after the formal process developed. Because of translation and historical inaccuracies, there may be variant spellings of certain saints' names, or dates and places of birth and death. Remember, before and even well after the invention of the printing press, a lot of church records were completed by hand — without the luxury of spell check!

Conventions Used in This Book

Following are some conventions we use that you'll want to keep in mind when reading this book:

- ✓ We use the traditional dating system of AD (*anno domini*, Latin for the “year of the Lord”) instead of the more recent usage of CE (common era), because of consistency. In the original records, the AD and BC (before Christ) designations of linear time are the only ones used. This convention isn't meant to be insensitive to non-Christian readers but to be consistent with the setting in which the documents were made.
- ✓ The saints we look at in this book are those whose existence has been verified and documented. The abbreviation of the word “saint” is St. for the singular and SS. for the plural.
- ✓ Most saints of the early church, before the East-West Schism of 1054, are recognized by both Catholic and Orthodox Christians, while many of the post-Reformation (16th century) saints are typically only venerated by Catholics.
- ✓ We use *italics* for emphasis and to highlight new words or terms that we define.
- ✓ When known, we list the saint's town or country of origin on the first line below the saint's name.

- ✔ If the dates of the person's beatification and canonization are known, we include that information on the next two lines.
- ✔ We list patron information on the next line for those saints who are designated patrons of certain countries, occupations, or human conditions.
- ✔ Lastly, if the saint has a date on the Roman calendar (the liturgical celebrations for the Catholic Church around the world), we include that date on the next line before we look at his or her life in more detail.

What You're Not to Read

This book is a reference book, so you don't have to read everything. Sidebars — text enclosed in a shaded gray box — give you information that's interesting but not necessarily critical to your understanding of the chapter or section topic. You can skip them if you're pressed for time and still get the most important information. You can also skip any text marked by a Technical Stuff icon (see "Icons Used in This Book" later in this introduction for more information).

Foolish Assumptions

In writing this book, we made some assumptions about you, the reader:

- ✔ You aren't yet a saint yourself — that is, you're still among the living — but you want to know something about those men and women of faith who lived before you and who are honored for their holy lives.
- ✔ You may not be a Catholic Christian (you may be a Protestant or Evangelical Christian), but you're curious about the lives of those particular men and women who are honored and venerated as being loyal friends and servants of God.
- ✔ You may be a Catholic who remembers reading or hearing about the lives of the saints, and you want to refresh your memory or clarify some details.
- ✔ You may have no religious affiliation but you have respect and admiration for the men and women who showed courage during trial, tribulation, suffering, and persecution in defending their faith.
- ✔ You're just curious and want to know the patron saint of your occupation or homeland, or you want to know more about those saintly people who overcame the same obstacles you're battling each day.

How This Book Is Organized

This book comes in 7 parts, consisting of 22 chapters and 3 appendixes. Throughout the book, we refer you to other parts of the book to make it easy for you to get a better appreciation and understanding of a certain subject, but each part and chapter stands on its own, so you can read them in any order you like.

Part I: In the Beginning

In this part, we look at sainthood in general, the process involved, and how it's applied specifically to certain individuals. We also examine the very first to be called saints — the apostles and disciples whom Jesus chose to start and to preach in his church.

The Catholic Church has the most saints because it's the oldest religion venerating the saints and is one of the few faith traditions to have an elaborate system to publicly declare someone a saint. This part looks at that procedure, which has been streamlined by recent popes.

Part II: Put to the Test

Saints are holy men and women who more often than not had to endure many trials and tribulations. This part looks at those brave souls who overcame their own personal weaknesses and temptations and never gave up in their struggle for sanctity.

We also look at those who battled religious persecution and opposition, not to mention prejudice and discrimination, because of their faith, as well as those who had to contend with the natural desire to marry and have children but who, for a higher love of God, embraced a celibate life of virginity and service to the Church. Finally, we look at those exceptional and rare saints who overcame even the ravages of time and whose dead bodies remain incorrupt (undecayed).

Part III: Living the Faith

From popes to pioneers, founding fathers to founding mothers, and noble kings to noble queens, this part looks at those pivotal saints who influenced and shaped Church history and Church life because of their position in the world or in the Church. These saints put their faith into practice and were instrumental in spreading and sustaining that same faith.

Part IV: Explaining the Faith

The learned wise men and women of this part are the saints whose love of truth and ability to defend and teach the faith preserved and promoted their beloved religion. Though not all held academic degrees, their titles of honor are based on the success they had explaining Christian theology.

Fathers, Doctors, and Pastors of the Church are looked at for their vital contribution to the establishment of Christianity — not just as a religion but also as the means to sow the seeds of faith.

Part V: Living with the Saints

In this part, you meet some of the saints-to-be — those men and women currently beatified who are awaiting the final decree of canonization from the pope, whereby they become official saints of the Catholic Church.

We also examine things associated with saints, like their relics and shrines. Relics are either parts of the saint's body or things that he or she owned, touched, wore, and so on. These artifacts are honored not for any magical reason but because that's all that's left of these holy men and women.

Part VI: The Part of Tens

If you like lists, the Part of Tens is for you. We give you ten of the most popular litanies and novenas of saints. We also give you ten places of saintly pilgrimage (shrines) and ten famous families of saints.

Part VII: Appendixes

Here we list the feast day for each saint as found on the current Roman calendar (the Catholic Church liturgical observance), as well as a list of patron saints and their particular patronage (place, occupation, or condition).

Icons Used in This Book

Icons are the fancy little pictures in the margins of this book. Here's a guide to what they look like and signify:



This icon marks interesting information that makes it easier for you to get the inside scoop on saints and saintly facts.



This icon points out ideas that sum up and reinforce the concepts we discuss. In fact, if you're short on time and can't read an entire section, go straight to this icon. Also, if you need a refresher in a chapter for any reason, you can skim through and read these to reinforce the main points.



Think of this icon as bonus material — the info it flags gives you some background about the subject that's not critical. In some cases, this information gives you the brief history of a point, or more detail than is absolutely necessary. We think the information is interesting, so we include it — but if you're in a time crunch, you can skip over it.

Where to Go from Here

You can start right in with Chapter 1 and read to the end, or you can use the table of contents and index to find just the bit of information you're looking for. If you're curious about the Apostles, turn to Chapter 3. For information on the Virgin Mary and the archangels, go to Chapter 2. Or, if you're interested in people like Mother Teresa — people who've been beatified but aren't yet official saints — check out Chapter 18.

The great thing about this book is that order doesn't matter. In most chapters, the saints are listed alphabetically (in a few chapters, chronological listing makes more sense, and we clarify that in each of the chapters), and the chapters are arranged by broad categories. You can read any chapter or any part of a chapter that interests you, or you can read the entire book from cover to cover.

For more in-depth study, we recommend Fr. Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints* in multi-volume and single-volume editions. He did a tremendous amount of research and study on almost every saint the Church recognizes.

Part I

In the Beginning

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



“Her devotion, faith, and miracles all qualify her for consideration to sainthood. Still, one wonders how she’d react to a long weekend babysitting the Fitzgibbon boys and their Irish wolfhound.”

W *In this part . . .*

we can't really expect you to understand the saints until we explain what sainthood is and how it all comes together. In this part, we discuss the idea of sainthood, its qualities and characteristics, and the criteria the Church uses to determine whether someone is qualified to be named a saint. Anyone who makes it to heaven is a saint, but the true "official" saints are those of whom the Church has said: That man or woman lived a holy life worth imitating.

Saints are considered friends of God who were his faithful servants while alive on earth. This part looks at some of the first Christian saints of history — the Apostles and the Evangelists. We also include the most famous and beloved of all the saints, the Virgin Mary, and we briefly examine the mysterious spiritual beings who live with the saints in heaven — the angels.