

**What is a saint?** Holy (set apart) person; **How does one become a holy person?** Living according to Christ's teachings passed on through the Church— faith & works till the end required; **Who is called to be a saint?** We all are (see St. Paul's writings)

God through the Church makes saints using: 1) Faith, 2) Liturgy & Prayer, 3) Sacraments, 4) Devotions & 5) Works

**Faith:** A gift from God. We ask those who want to enter the Church, "What do you ask of the Church?" Answer: "Faith" Hebrews 11:1-3: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old received divine approval. By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear.

**Liturgy & Prayer:** Communication & communion with God which gives us grace (God's life) to believe and live as we ought

**Sacraments:** Liturgical action instituted by Christ to give us God's life enabling us to become holy and cleanse us from our sins;  
**Sacraments of Initiation:** Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist; **Sacraments of Healing:** Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick;  
**Sacraments of Service:** Matrimony & Holy Orders – (Catechism section 2)

**Devotions:** Attaches our hearts to good practices & helps us to love (<http://melekali.50megs.com/Writings/>, RCIA, Prayer)

**Works:** Lead us to please God by how we treat others (we are to imitate Christ)

**Spiritual Works of Mercy:** Instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, admonish sinners, bear wrongs patiently, willingly forgive offenses, comfort the afflicted & pray for the living and dead.

**Corporal Works of Mercy:** Feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, give shelter to those without, visit the sick, ransom the captive & bury the dead.

**Virtues:** Given to us to live life as did Christ, grow as we grow in our spiritual life (by practice – you have to do it to increase)

**3 theological virtues:** faith, hope, love

**4 cardinal virtues:** prudence, justice, fortitude & temperance

**Communion of Saints:** All Christians on earth, in purgatory and in heaven are in communion. Hebrews 12:1a: Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses

**Catholics believe** that the one Mystical Church and Body of Christ exists on three levels: the Church Militant on earth, the Church Triumphant in heaven, and the Church Suffering in purgatory, and that communication can take place between all three.

Catechism 946-962 Summary:

**The Church is a communion of saints:** Church of all three levels together form one Church; in this communion, the merciful love of God and his saints is always attentive to our prayers

**Holy Persons' suffering bears fruit for all:** Communion of saints refers also to the communion of "holy persons" in Christ who "died for all," so that what each one does or suffers in and for Christ bears fruit for all (the meaning & purpose of suffering).

**All Saints' Day:** November 1 feast is to honor the saints, known and unknown, in heaven

**All Souls' Day:** November 2 feast is to commemorate all faithful departed (prayer for the dead)

There are thousands of people the Catholic Church recognizes & declares as saints (Catholic Online claims over 10,000). The Church holds these people up to us as examples to imitate in living out the Christian life. Most recognized saints in the first 3 centuries were so named because they were martyrs. Today's rules to declare a person a saint determined by the Pope (Holy Father) follow this pattern.

**Examples:** Discussion by Laurie.

**Picking a saints name:** My experience by Clinton.

*Future reading & reference...*

The process of the Church declaring one a saint:

1. It begins with a local community or religious order. Person would be a martyr or have displayed "heroic virtue" (virtues above).
2. There has to be grassroots support for the idea. No public acclaiming, no saint.
3. The grassroots support could form an ad hoc committee to ask people to pray that one be canonized and suggest people pray to him for help in their own lives. This group is creating a cult (devotion) that centers on the person, which is a private devotion. Devotees can meet and pray in homes or in the cemetery but not in church (public). The group will keep the person's things. Everything owned and used by the person will be a relic later in the process.
4. The local group needs the local Bishop's support. He's the one who decides to consider it. It could be a long time after that person's death before that happens. For example, for Father McGivney, more than 100 years went by between his death and the formal opening of his cause. In the case of Mother Teresa, just a few months lapsed between her death and the opening of her cause.
5. The Bishop takes it from here, but there is the matter of finances. The research, work and results presented to the Vatican in this determination takes money. The grassroots support can also request donations to help cover costs. The case will move from the diocese to Rome, and according to Church norms, that has to be the group backing the idea.
6. Postulator is the person who gathers the material for the bishop and oversees it getting put together. Once completed, the bishop sends it to Rome (hundreds of pages) & becomes the foundation for the *positio* (case file), promoting the advancement of the cause.
7. Then there is a "translation" of the body. The bishop and others are on hand when it is exhumed and examined. This is done to make sure this is the right person and can identify signs of incorruptibility, considered a potential indication of holiness (if there is corruption it is not viewed as a negative). As part of the translation, the body is typically moved to a more prominent place, one easier for pilgrims to visit.
8. The Congregation for the Causes of Saints carefully examines all the evidence & presents its findings to the head (prefect) and its members. They decide to forward the cause to the pope.
9. Once declared a Servant of God (cause opened) and then declared "Venerable" by a decree of a life of heroic virtue, the Vatican waits for a miracle to be attributed to the intervention of the Servant of God before naming this person "Blessed." At that point the person is given a particular liturgy and place on the local Church calendar and there can be a public devotion to that person in church. One further miracle is needed to name the person a saint.
10. Ultimately, the pope chooses to beatify the person or not. The ceremony can be held wherever the Pope wants. If a second miracle is attributed, the Pope can choose to canonize the person or not.

Two news stories about the process of naming saints:

Omaha, Neb., Feb 25, 2012 / <http://m.catholicnewsagency.com/new.php?n=24409>

Monterey, Calif., Mar 18, 2012 / <http://m.catholicnewsagency.com/new.php?n=24505>

Issues Related to the Communion of Saints:

**Prayers for the dead:** Tobit 12:12; 2 Maccabees 12:39-45; 1 Cor 15:29; 2 Tim 1:16-18

**Saints Who Died Are Aware of Earthly Affairs:** Mt 22:30 w/ Lk 15:7, 10 & 1 Cor 4:9; Heb 12:1

**Saints Who Died Intercede For Those On Earth:** Jer 15:1; 2 Macc 15:14; Rev 6:9-10

**Intercessory Mediation of Saints and Angels:** Tobit 12:12-15; Rev 5:8 & 8:3-4

**Dead Saints Appear On Earth to Interact With Men:** 1 Sam 28:12-15 with Ecclesiasticus 46:20; 2 Macc 15:13-16; Mt 17:1-3 and 27:50-53; Rev 11:3

**Guardian Angels:** Ps 34:7; 91:11; Mt 18:10; Acts 12:15; Heb 1:14

**Angels Are Aware of Our Thoughts:** Lk 15:10; 1 Cor 4:9

**Angels Participate In the Giving of God's Grace:** Rev 1:4

Some Online Resources on Saints:

Saints SQPN: <http://saints.sqpn.com/>

eCatholic Hub: [ecatholicub.net/study/saints](http://ecatholicub.net/study/saints)

Catholic Online: <http://www.catholic.org/saints/>

Resources for Catholic Educators: <http://www.silk.net/RelEd/saints.htm>

Catholic Saints Resource Center: <http://www.catholic-saints-resource-center.com/>