

Stories of everyday saints



Veronica Heley

40 stories with Bible links and related activities



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15 The Chambers, Vineyard
Abingdon OX14 3FE
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Tel: +44 (0)1865 319700
Email: enquiries@brf.org.uk
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Introduction

The forty men and women whose stories are told in this book may not have started out as perfect people, but they were used by God to do his work. Saints are people who listen to God and try to do what he wants.

The saints in this book fall into four categories:

- ✿ Bible saints from the New Testament, such as St Paul
- ✿ Historical and legendary saints, such as St George
- ✿ Worldwide saints, such as St Francis of Assisi
- ✿ More recent and contemporary saints, such as Mother Teresa

Some of the people have been formally named as saints by their church. In such cases, their name will appear with 'St' before it, as in St Patrick. Others have not been recognized publicly in this way, but are included in this book because God used them to carry out a particular task. These people are referred to simply by their ordinary names, such as Florence Nightingale.

The saints are given in this book in chronological order of their special days. So, for instance, in January we have Albert Schweitzer and in July we have St Christopher. This is so that, when appropriate, the story can tie in with a particular date.

There is an alphabetical index on pages 92–94 which also gives the era in which the saint lived, a key date, a brief note of his or her life, and a Bible reference.

Suggestions for activities

On each right-hand page there is a section for optional activities. Sometimes there is only one suggestion, suitable for all ages. Sometimes there are two activities, one intended for use by younger children, and one for older.

Occasionally three activities are suggested. Among these are suggestions for worksheets, crafts, drama, and creative writing.

Songs

I have given some suggestions for songs that tie in with the saint for the day, although you may have your own ideas.

Layout

There is a double page for each saint in this book, and on it you will find:

- ✿ A key date on which to remember the saint. This might be the date of birth or death, or the date of the formal recognition of that person as a saint
- ✿ A Bible reference, usually from the Contemporary English Version of the Bible (CEV)
- ✿ The story of the saint
- ✿ A prayer
- ✿ Suggestions for activities
- ✿ A symbol for the saint
- ✿ A suggested song or songs

In the middle of the book there is a photocopiable chart where all the saints' symbols are given. Each symbol can be coloured in as the children hear about the different saints.

St Kentigern (Mungo)



Key date: 13 January

Died 612.

Bishop of Strathclyde.
Started the legend that
gives Glasgow its arms of
ring and fish.



**When you give a feast, invite the poor,
the crippled, the lame, and the blind.**

LUKE 14:13

The ring and the fish

Do you have a pet name? Long ago there was a bishop who was loved so much that he, too, had a pet name. People called him Mungo, even though his real name was Kentigern. His cathedral in Glasgow is called St Mungo's, and his name is remembered today because St Mungo's charity in London still houses and looks after people sleeping rough on the streets.

Bishop Kentigern didn't have an easy life. He was a good man and always did his best to look after the people in his care, but then he fell foul of the politicians. One moment he was quietly doing his job in Glasgow, and the next he was sent into exile in Cumbria. Fortunately, he was able to return home after some years, and one particular story about him comes from the time when he got back.

The king of that part of Britain was very angry with his wife. She had given a precious ring of his to another man. You can imagine how well that went down with the king. He wrenched the ring back and, in a temper, he threw it far out to sea.

'Bring me back my ring within three days,' he said. 'Or else...!'

The queen was terribly upset. How on earth was she to recover the ring?

Bishop Kentigern heard all about it, and knew how sorry she was for having been so silly. He told her not to worry and... he produced the selfsame ring. One of his monks had caught a fine salmon and, on cutting it open to clean it, had discovered the missing ring inside.

That is how the great city of Glasgow came to have a ring and a fish on its coat of arms.

Prayer

Dear Father God, please look after the poor people who have nowhere to live.

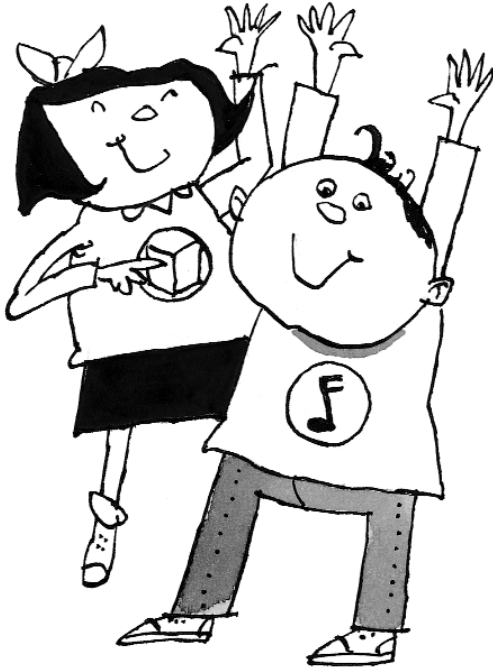


Suggested activities



Make a badge

FOR ALL AGES



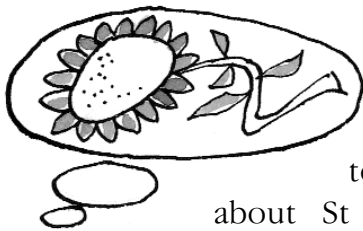
You will need:

- Badges—these can be bought ready-made, or cut from card with a safety pin taped on to the back. Or you can use sticky labels
- Pencils or coloured pens or crayons to decorate the badges with

Draw a symbol to fit into your badge, using the things you like best, or the symbol you would choose, to show people what you are like. Colour it in.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

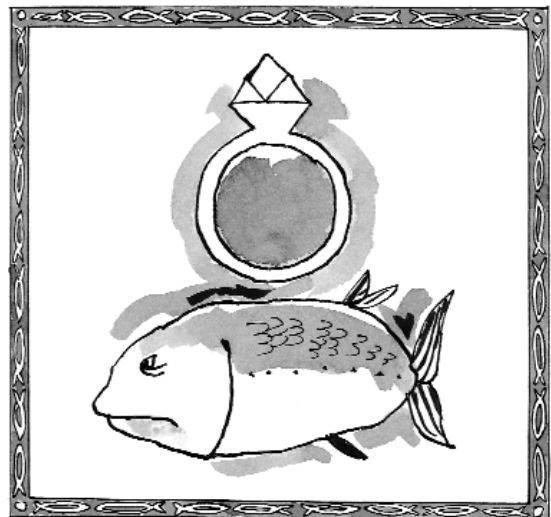
Thinking about symbols



The city of Glasgow has a ring and fish as its emblem or badge, to remind everyone about St Mungo. Think what symbol or symbols you would choose, to show people what you are like. If you are a musician, it might be a musical note or a recorder; a mathematician might use a geometrical shape. Someone who is fond of reading might like a book; someone who likes flowers might like a plant; and a footballer could have a ball going into the net!

Then make your own badge.

Symbol



Suggested song

Stand up, stand up for Jesus (JP226)

Albert Schweitzer



Key date: 14 January

1875–1965.

Nobel Prize winner,
musician, philosopher,
doctor. Founded and
worked in a hospital in
French Equatorial Africa.

Schweitzer said, 'No way of life makes more sense than the way taught by Jesus.'



'I am the way, the truth, and the life!'

JOHN 14:6

The man with four hats

Let's count how many careers Albert Schweitzer had. As a boy, he was so clever at music that everyone thought he would make it his career. He wrote a study of the musician, Bach, and everyone said, 'Well, that proves it. Albert Schweitzer's going to be a great musician.' (That's one!)

He went to university to study the life of Jesus and wrote a brilliant book about that, too. Now he had a choice of careers, music or preaching. (That's two!) But then another career turned up, because he happened to read about the needs of the poorest, sickest people in Africa. He decided to throw up his comfortable life in Europe and study all over again, this time to become...

a doctor. Six years later he was ready. He raised money by giving organ recitals and talks, and went out to the Congo to help the people there. (That makes three!)

His hospital was a very basic building, but as soon as he moved in, sick people started to arrive. He worked from dawn to dusk, helping them.

When the Second World War came, some local officials were suspicious of Schweitzer because he'd been born in a town in Europe which had once been part of Germany. He had to stop working as a doctor and was sent to France until the war ended and he could once more return to his hospital.

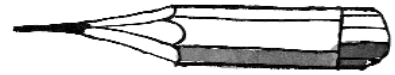
While he was waiting for the war to end, he started on his fourth career and wrote another famous book. This time his subject was the ideas people have about the way we live. This book won the highest award there is, called the Nobel Prize. What a man! Four careers in one lifetime! That takes a bit of doing, doesn't it?

Prayer

Our Father, help me to work hard and make the most of the gifts you have given me.



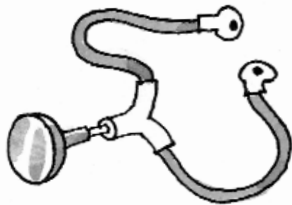
Suggested activities



If the cap fits...

FOR ALL AGES

Can you see what Albert Schweitzer would use, or how he would look, in each of his different careers? Draw lines to link the picture to the right career.



Musician

Minister

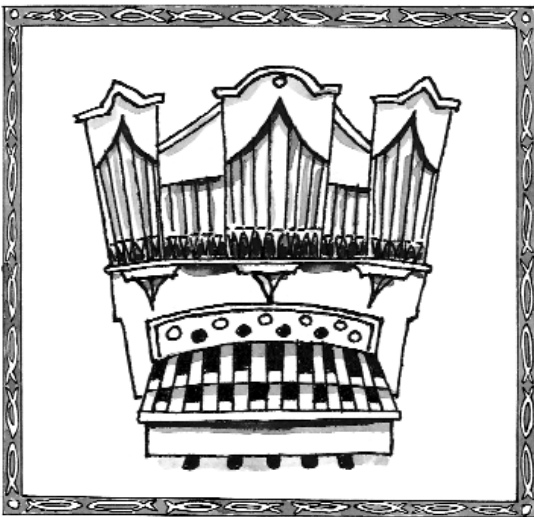
Author

Doctor

First Aid

How much First Aid do you know? For example, what would you do if a friend had a fall in the playground? Or cut a finger badly? What would you do if you accidentally burned yourself at home?

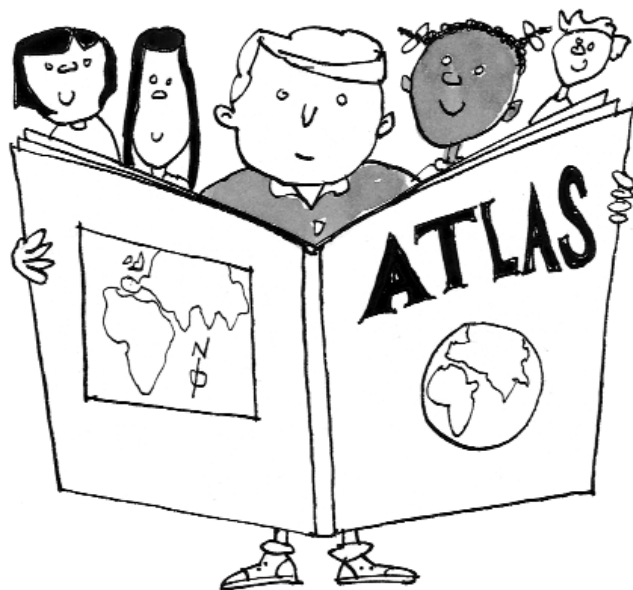
Symbol



Where did he work?

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

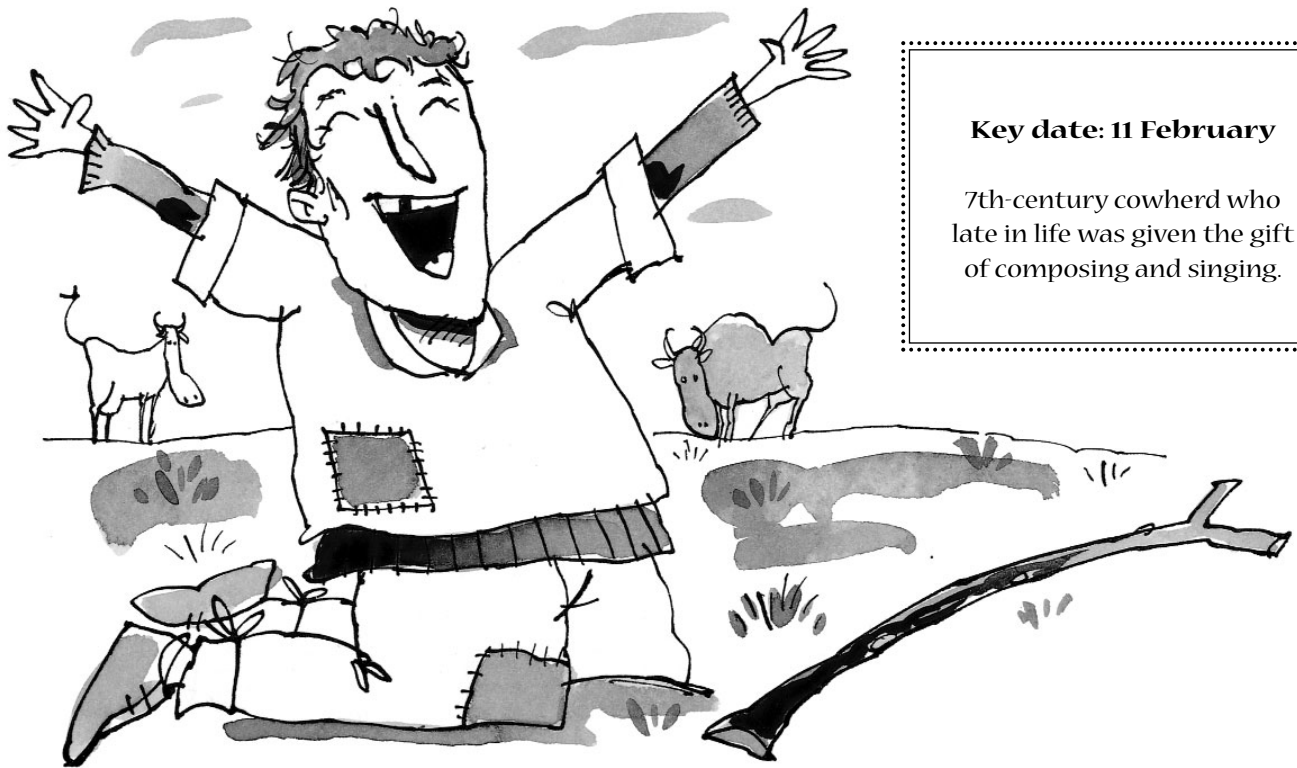
Use an atlas to find whereabouts Albert Schweitzer worked in Africa. What is that part of Africa called nowadays?



Suggested songs

Bind us together, Lord (JP17; C22)
Jesus' hands were kind hands (JP134; K194)

St Caedmon



Key date: 11 February

7th-century cowherd who late in life was given the gift of composing and singing.



Shout praises to the Lord, everyone on this earth. Be joyful and sing as you come in to worship the Lord!

PSALM 100:1-2

The song writer

Caedmon couldn't sing to save his life. It had bothered him a lot when he was younger, but now that he was getting on in years, he accepted it. He was thankful that, even though he could neither read nor write, he still had a good job. He looked after the cattle in a big monastery in the north of England. The cows didn't care that he couldn't sing and he always left the great hall after supper before it was his turn to entertain the guests.

One evening he fell asleep in his cowshed and had a strange dream. A man called him by name and said, 'Caedmon, sing me a song.'

'I don't know how,' said Caedmon.

'You can sing to me. Sing about the Creation.'

In his dream Caedmon began to sing in praise of God, in words he had never heard before and in perfect tune! When he woke up, he could remember exactly what he'd sung and found himself adding more words to the tune. Even to his own ears, his voice sounded different. He went to the estate manager and told him what had happened. Then he was called to see the head of the monastery, the great Abbess Hilda.

The abbess was amazed that this totally uneducated man could sing about God—even if he could only do it in his rough-and-ready English dialect instead of in the proper Latin. She put Caedmon through all sorts of tests, telling him stories from the Bible and asking him to make up songs about them, which Caedmon now found that he could do.

Soon people were singing Caedmon's songs far and wide, and this elderly man—who hadn't been able to sing before—became the pop star of his day.

Prayer

Dear Lord, please help me to use wisely whatever gifts you choose to give me



Suggested activities



Have a good sing!

FOR ALL AGES

Sing Hallelu. Divide the group into two. Appoint a cheerleader for each section and see which one can sing louder!

One side sings:

Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu, halleluia

Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu, halleluia

Halleluia

Halleluia

Halleluia

The other side sings:

We'll praise the Lord!

We'll praise the Lord!

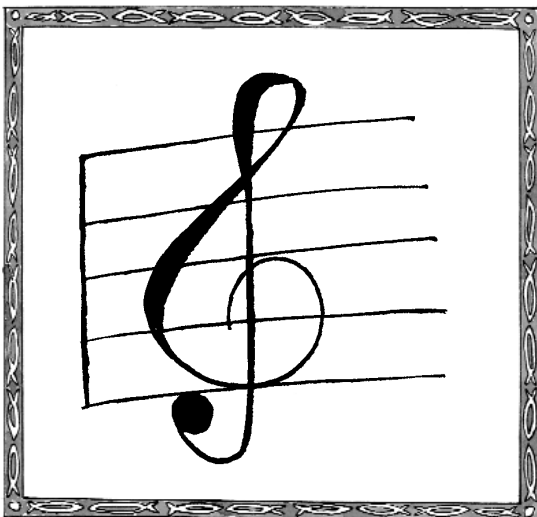
We'll praise the Lord!

We'll praise the Lord!

We'll praise the Lord!

(Both sides:) WE'LL PRAISE THE LORD!

Symbol



Repeat, with both sides seated to start with. They then stand to sing their own part, and sit after it. This takes some concentration and leads to lots of mistakes, especially when taken quickly.

Alternatively, divide the children into four groups and sing the song as a round, with each group in turn standing for 'We'll praise the Lord!' (Don't do this if the walls are thin and you are likely to disturb other classes.)

Suggested songs

Hallelu (JP67; C76)
Jesus bids us shine (JP128)
Morning has broken (JP166; C153)

Make up a poem

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Make up a poem in praise of God's world. Make up some words of praise to God, using the tune of a well-known song.