

The Saints Choose Us

Patron Saints & Virtues for the New Year

DO NOT WEEP, FOR I SHALL BE MORE USEFUL TO YOU AFTER MY DEATH AND I SHALL HELP YOU THEN MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN DURING MY LIFE. . . I WANT TO SPEND MY HEAVEN IN DOING GOOD ON EARTH.

-St Dominic (dying) and St Therese (Final Conversations)

Best practice from the Minneapolis Minnesota Regnum Christi women's section.

What it is

In the midst of a festive atmosphere, each member of the section receives a virtue card with three gifts: their patron saint for the year, a virtue to work on, and an inspirational quote.

The need it meets

"Patron saints" is a mystique activity that inspires, motivates, and guides us in our spiritual formation. It provides an opportunity to experience the Holy Spirit's action in a personal way and responds to the human need for friendship, both with each other and with the saints in heaven.

Where it's from

- Patron saint cards are a longstanding annual tradition among Legionaries, consecrated members, Regnum Christi members and ECYD.
- In a social setting we receive a 'patron saint' to guide us in the next year, as well as a virtue to pray for and work on.

How it works

- The cards themselves are simple enough: they can be as simple as a card with the name of the saint, the virtue, and the short quote from Church tradition or our spirituality on the back. They can be decorated or plain, with pictures or without.
- The card can be chosen "blindly" by each member (e.g., by pulling a number from a hat, and then matching it up with the numbered card) and then announced to everyone.
- The giving out of patron saint cards can be surrounded by all kinds of fun and festivity: e.g., there can be a theme dinner, or contests with prizes, testimonies, a champagne toast, time to socialize and enjoy each other's company...

- For example, one year a virtue card event was held on the feast of St Paul (January 25) and our theme was **THE AMAZING RACE**. Activities included:
- Members had to pair off and complete a series of "missions" prior to the event with prizes given to teams. We also held a team competition quiz on St Paul, and the winners received a prize.
- Two members offered brief testimonials about their experiences with their virtue cards over the years.
- Champagne toasts were offered, and we concluded with Mediterranean food (with our theme) and time to socialize.

The results

- Patron saints has become a strong moment of mystique and integration for the section members.
- It is consistently one of the most highly-attended events of the year.
- A long-standing member: "It is my favorite event of the whole year. Not only do you get to be with your friends, but there is a gift from the Holy Spirit just for you!"
- Another member says, "It's actually very formative. As I have prayed about and considered my virtue in past years, I have grown in my understanding of that virtue and have seen how the Holy Spirit has helped me to grow in that virtue during the course of the year."

The hardest part

- Finding a good time on the calendar is always challenging.
- How to implement it
- Organize the event:
- Gather a committee of 3-4 members, with the AFIRE team integration coordinator at the head.
- Meet to discuss matters such as location, theme, agenda, personnel needed and invitations.
- Distribute the work (food, set-up, etc.) to teams and committees.
- Send invitations to the members of the section three weeks prior to the event.
- Make the patron saint cards: start with non-laminated holy cards. Print virtue card information (attached) on address labels and affix to back of the holy cards before laminating them. Place in white envelope.
- When the event is over, be sure missing members receive a virtue card through their team leader.

