

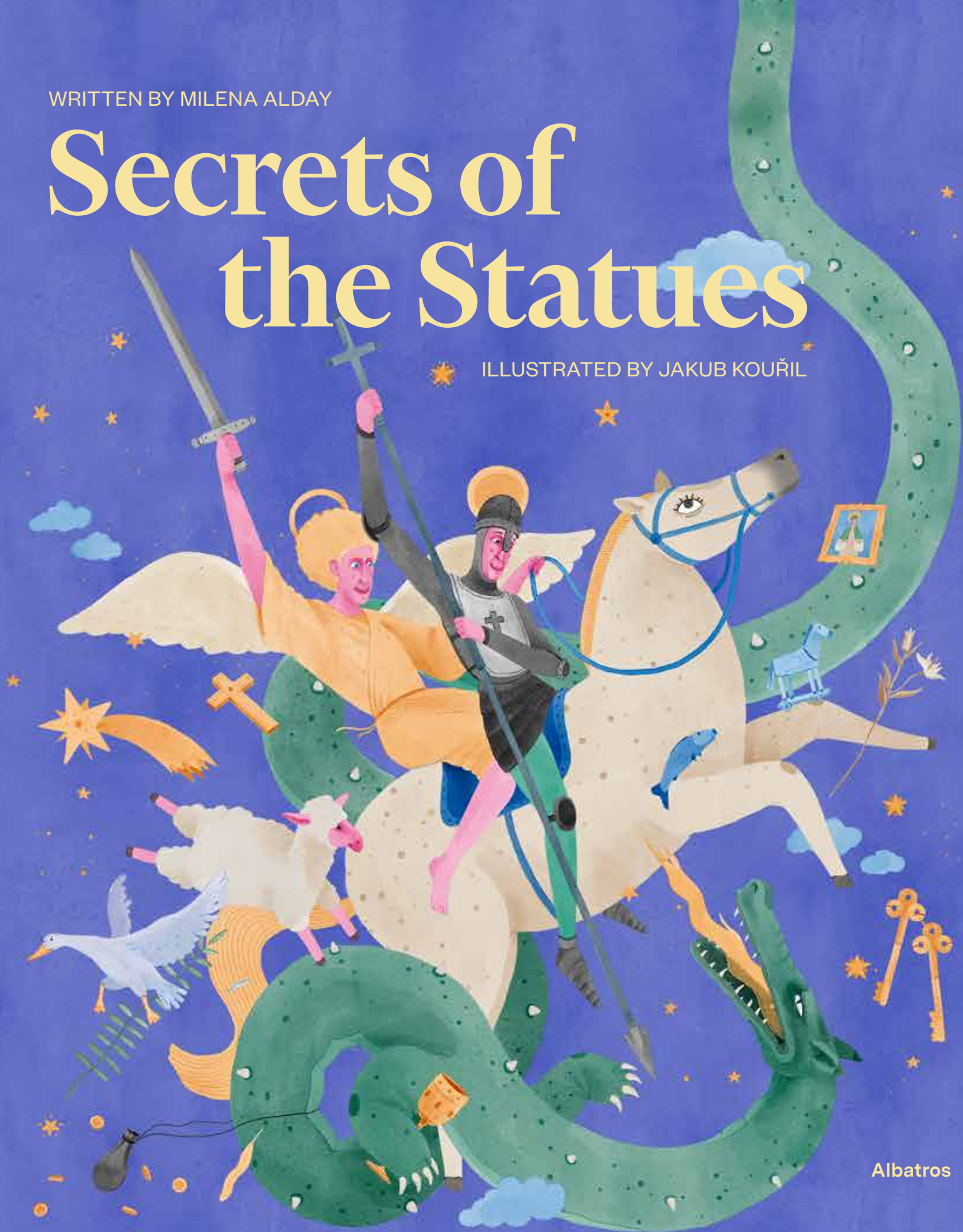
Secrets of the Statues

WRITTEN BY MILENA ALDAY

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# Secrets of the Statues

ILLUSTRATED BY JAKUB KOUŘIL



Albatros





# God the Father

**Symbols** — an old man with a white beard and a full head of hair, seated on a grand throne in Heaven.



"Father and I are like a team. If you see me, you see Father too."  
- Jesus, from the Book of John

In the beginning, there was God the Father, also known as the Lord or Yahweh. He made the whole world, and is like the big boss of everything. Because he loves us so much, God the Father decided to send his only son, Jesus, to us through the Holy Spirit and Mary. Jesus came down to earth as a regular guy, but he's still really close to his father up in heaven.



# Jesus Christ

**Symbols** — a young man wearing simple white robes, often shown with a cross or a lamb.



The start of our modern calendars begins with the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. So, when we say the year 2024, it means Jesus was born 2,024 years ago. Any year before that is called "BC", which means "Before Christ."

Jesus was born in Bethlehem to a young Jewish girl named Mary and her husband Joseph, who had traveled there from Nazareth. He was born in a humble stable, and people from all walks of life came to visit him. When the great King Herod heard about the birth of God's Son, he ordered all baby boys to be killed. But Mary, Joseph, and Jesus managed to escape.

As Jesus grew up, he learned carpentry from Joseph. Later, he was baptized by John the Baptist and then spent three years with his 12 followers (apostles), spreading the message of his Heavenly Father's love.



# The Holy Spirit

**Symbols** — dove, wind, fire, flames, clouds, water, oil, and light.

At first, the Lord, through the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, gave people Jesus Christ, the Son of God. After Jesus rose from the dead, He told His apostles that He would leave them with His successor, the Holy Spirit: "Receive the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit is like God's living presence on earth, even after Jesus went up to heaven. In the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit is a very important part that works all throughout history and is always with us.

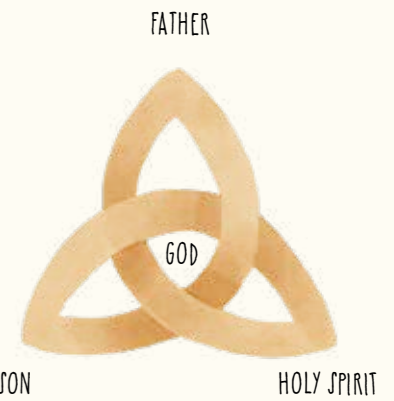
Jesus (from the Greek "Iesous") comes from the Hebrew name Yeshua, which means "God saves."

Christ (from the Greek "Christos") means "chosen one." It's a special title that shows someone is dedicated to serving God.



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You can see the Holy Trinity in every Christian church.

### The Birth of the Lord

Joseph and Mary found refuge in a simple shepherd's shelter, where the Chosen Son of God came into the world. Instead of a bed, he lay in a wooden manger. God wanted to share the joy with the whole world – so angels sang joyfully, the sky lit up with light, and a comet appeared, showing everyone across the land the way to the newborn Savior. Not only ordinary people came to worship him, but also three wise men from distant lands.



### Escape to Egypt

Right after Jesus was born, an angel warned the young family about the danger from the cruel King Herod, and they had to flee to Egypt. There, Jesus grew up to be a young man, and Joseph taught him how to be a carpenter.

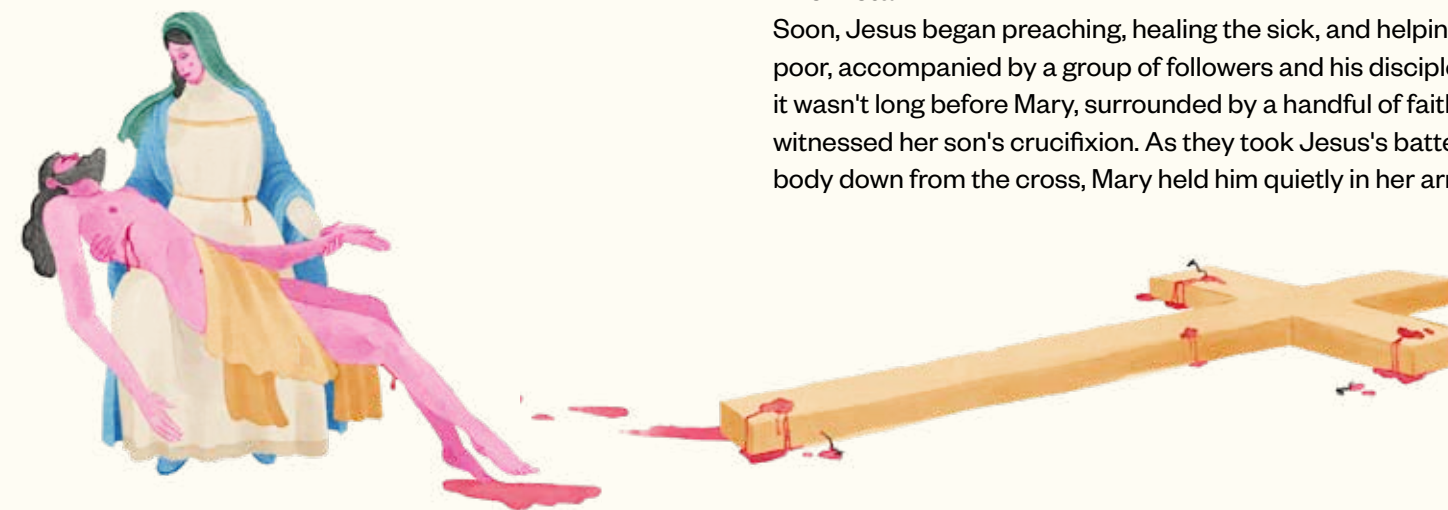
### His First Miracle

Once, the family attended a wedding where the wine ran out. Mary quietly asked her son for help. Jesus then performed his first miracle – turning water into wine.



### The Pieta

Soon, Jesus began preaching, healing the sick, and helping the poor, accompanied by a group of followers and his disciples. But it wasn't long before Mary, surrounded by a handful of faithful, witnessed her son's crucifixion. As they took Jesus's battered body down from the cross, Mary held him quietly in her arms.



### The Assumption of Mary

After her death, Mary, as the Mother of God, was resurrected and taken up to heaven.



# Saint George

The Patron Saint of scouts, archers, soldiers, farmers, England, Portugal, Malta, and Ethiopia.

**Symbols** — a dragon, a knight on horseback, a flag.



Saint George was born in the 3rd century in what is now Turkey, probably into a noble family. His father was a top Roman soldier, so George was supposed to be a soldier too. He served the Emperor Diocletian.

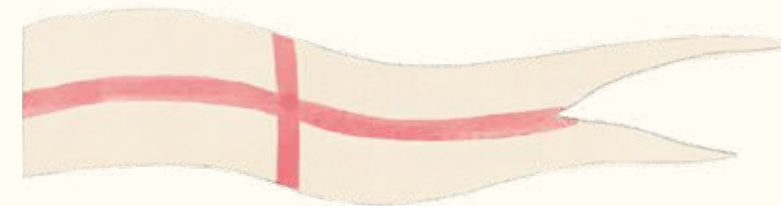
But when the emperor ordered his people to hurt Christians, George refused. He wouldn't give up his faith, so they hurt him badly and then cut off his head as punishment.

The legend of Saint George comes from the writings of Jacobus de Voragine, the author of the Golden Legend. According to this tale, a dragon entered a village and wouldn't go away. The townsfolk tried feeding it sheep, but it was still hungry. When Princess Cleolinda suggested a new idea, George showed up in armor.

He defeated the dragon and brought it wounded to the king. He had promised to kill the dragon if the king and all the people accepted Christianity. The king agreed, and George killed the dragon.



🚩 St. George's Cross - a red cross on a white background, the basis of today's British flag.



👮 And what would Saint George be today? How about a brave soldier? Look - he just swapped his knight's armor for military camo!



# Saint Francis of Assisi

The Patron Saint of Italy and ecologists.

**Symbols** — a rope with three knots, a cross, the stigmata (marks on a person's body that look like Jesus's wounds), and animals (usually birds or a wolf).

🕒 His followers are called **franciscans** (or Friars Minor).

🕒 In 1223, in the village of Greccio, Francis decided to celebrate Christmas with a live performance of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. This small idea became a tradition, and even today we build Nativity scenes at home and in churches during Christmas to remember the birth of Jesus.



In a wealthy family in Assisi, Italy, a boy was born who was named John. Because his mother was French and his father traded with France, John was nicknamed Frankie (Francesco). During a military campaign, he was captured and spent a year in a dark dungeon. Upon returning home, Christ appeared to him and asked him to restore one of His churches.

Francis renounced his wealth, repaired the church, and decided to live in poverty, helping the poor and the sick, including lepers. As a missionary, he joined the crusades. Sick and exhausted, he died at the age of 45. He wished to be buried in bare earth in front of the altar in the church he had repaired.

🕒 Until the 20th century, leprosy was an incurable disease. Those infected were covered in sores, and their entire bodies slowly decayed. People were scared of them and avoided them. They weren't allowed to live with others, and most of them lived isolated or with other sick people in remote and poor conditions.

🕒 **And who would Saint Francis of Assisi be today?** He loved nature, so he would probably still care for it today – as a conservationist. He would help protect animals and the countryside, check water cleanliness, and sort waste. Can you think of other ways to help nature? How do you help nature? And how can each of us help?



# Saint Catherine

Patron saint of girls, theologians and philosophers, cyclists, and universities.

**Symbols** — a wheel, a crown, a martyr's palm, and a book.



Catherine was born in the 3rd century in Alexandria, Egypt, to a noble family during the reign of King Costus. She was beautiful, smart, and rich, and no suitor was good enough for her. Soon, though, she became a devoted Christian. She converted 50 scholars and theologians to her faith, but a ruler named Emperor Maximin punished them by burning them to death. He then had Catherine tortured.

Her body miraculously healed each time, though, and an angel broke the torture wheel. The emperor then ordered her to be beheaded. According to legend, milk flowed from her neck instead of blood, and angels carried her body to Mount Sinai.

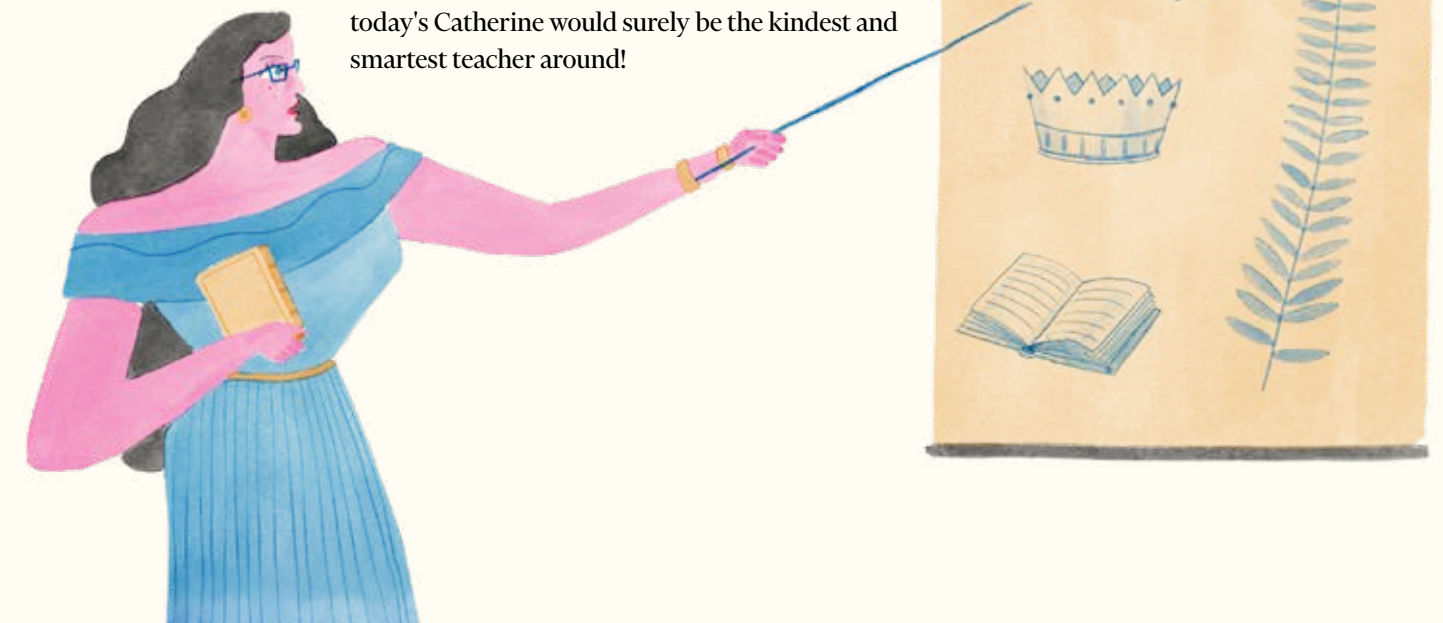


## 📍 Tomb of Saint Catherine

The ancient monastery of Saint Catherine, located at the foot of Mount Sinai in Israel. Standing amidst the Sinai Desert, it is one of the oldest monasteries in the world, founded as early as the mid-6th century CE. According to legend, angels brought Saint Catherine's body here, and the martyr's tomb remains a site of many miracles to this day.

## 📍 And who would Saint Catherine be today?

As the patron saint of universities, today's Catherine would surely be the kindest and smartest teacher around!



# Map of places where you can see the saints in paintings and statues

1a

**Virgin Mary**  
The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA  
Leonardo da Vinci, Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy

1b

**Virgin Mary**  
Cave and Sanctuary of St. Michael, the archangel, Mounte Sant'Angelo, Peninsula, Italy

1c

**Virgin Mary**  
The Sistine Madonna, Raphael Santi, Zwinger, Dresden, Germany

2

**Saint Barbara**  
Palazzo Bellomo, Syracuse, Sicily

3

**Saint Florian**  
Two large wooden statues of Saint Florian, St. Florian Monastery, St. Florian, Austria

4

**Saint Francis of Assisi**  
The Tomb of St. Francis of Assisi, Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Assisi, Italy

5

**Saint Lucy**  
Francesco Zaganelli, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA

6

**Saint Catherine of Alexandria**  
Workshop of Jan Crocq, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA

7

**Saint Joan of Arc**  
Joan of Arc at the Coronation of Charles VII, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Louvre, Paris, France

8

**Saint Clare**  
Monastery painting from the Workshop of Master of Santa Chiara, Basilica of Saint Clare, Assisi, Italy

9a

**Saint Teresa of Ávila**  
Statue of St. Teresa, Ávila, Spain

9b

**Saint Teresa of Ávila**  
Sculptural altarpiece Ecstasy of Saint Teresa, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome, Italy

10

**Saint Anna**  
St. Anne and the Virgin with the Child, Lucas Cranach the Elder, Alte Pinakothek, Munich, Germany

11

**Saint Nicholas**  
Benvenuto di Giovanni, National Gallery, London, United Kingdom

12

**Saint George**  
Saint George and the Dragon, Raphael Louvre, Paris, France

13

**Saint John of Nepomuk**  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA

14

**Saint James**  
Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

15

**Saint John Baptist**  
Leonardo da Vinci, Louvre, Paris, France

16

**Saint Thomas**  
The Incredulity of Saint Thomas, Caravaggio, Sanssouci, Postdam, Germany

17

**Saint Hubert**  
The Vision of St. Hubert, Jan Brueghel the Elder a P. P. Rubens Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain

18

**Saint Sebastian**  
Pietro Perugino, Louvre, Paris, France

19

**Saint Matthew**  
François van Loo, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom

20

**Saint Andrew**  
Jusepe de Ribera, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, Spain

21

**Saint Valentine**  
Statue of St. Valentine, Parish church, St. Veit, Triestingtal, Lower Austria, Austria

22

**Saint Martin**  
The Tomb of St. Martin, Basilica of St. Martin, Tours, France

23

**Saint Luke**  
St. Luke Drawing the Virgin, Rogier van der Weyden, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA

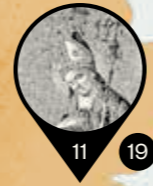


5

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1b

9b

2

14

9a

17

20



This book isn't just for those who believe the miraculous stories of the saints – it's also for everyone curious about their fascinating historical lives.

Saints are everywhere – in many towns, streets, churches, and landmarks, especially in Europe and South America!

We all know the famous statue of Christ in Rio de Janeiro, but what about the many Christian saints? Can you recognize them? Are you familiar with their stories?

Saints weren't born with any kind of "Check me out, world! I'm a Saint!" label on their foreheads.

They were regular people, just like us. They faced challenges, struggled with themselves, and had moments of doubt.

Dive into this book and discover that the path to sainthood is full of surprising and inspiring stories that can still resonate with us today.



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