



## **List of saints and models of faith**

Models of love for God's Creation

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For the Catholic community, the saints are inspiring models of their relationship with God's creation, for although the historicity of the stories varies, their legends contain beautiful teachings for Christians today.

Saint (feast day)	Time period and Current country	A short anecdote
<b>Prisca</b> (18 January)	(+52) Italie	She lived in Rome and was arrested for being a Christian during the reign of Emperor Claudius. Upon her release from prison, she still held steadfastly to her faith in Jesus Christ. This time her punishment included flogging, the pouring of boiling tallow upon her, and a second imprisonment. She was at last thrown to a lion in the amphitheater, but it quietly lay down at her feet.
<b>Paul of Tarsis</b> (25 January)	(5–67) Rome	In his letter to the Romans (chap. 8), he wrote: "Creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now".
<b>Clement of Rome</b> (23 January)	(+97) Rome	He was bishop of Rome, 3rd successor of Peter. "The very smallest of living beings meet together in peace and concord. All these the great Creator and Lord of all has appointed to exist in peace and harmony" Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 20
<b>John the Evangelist</b> (27 December)	(11–101) December	In the book of Revelation (chap. 4), he wrote: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created." He also had a vision of a new heaven and a new earth.
<b>Irenaeus of Lyon</b> (28 June, Catholics) (23 August, Orthodox)	(130-202) France	He is the second bishop of Lyon and venerated as a Father of the Church. "With profound wisdom and meticulous care, God has given proportion and harmony to all the things he has made, both the ancient things and those which his Word has accomplished in the last ages. ...] The things that have been made are diverse and manifold, but when placed in the totality of the work, they appear to be full of proportion and harmony... Those who listen to this melody must praise and glorify the Artist who made it. " <i>Against Heresies</i> , II, 25, 1-2

<b>Martina</b> (30 January)	(+228) Italie	After being torn with hooks and brought into the arena to be the prey of beasts, the lion lay down at her feet. She was tied to a post and the flames did not reach the audience but burned. Finally, the emperor beheaded her. The legend states that two eagles came ensure his body before another Christian could come to bury.
<b>Tryphon of Campsada</b> (1 February, Orthodox) (10 November, Cath.)	(+250) Turkey	As a young boy he took care of geese. St. Tryphon prayed and through his tenderness he came closer to God. God filled St. Tryphon with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Even as a young boy, St. Tryphon could heal the illnesses of people and animals, as well as cast out evil spirits. He became famous for healing animals; farmers prayed to him.
<b>Rieul de Senlis</b> (30 March)	(+260) Belgique	He preached beside a pond. The thousands of frogs croaking prevented the holy man to be heard. He asked them to stop in to name the creator, with the exception of one that could continue to sing. The frogs were silent. In the end, Rieul blessed and they resumed croaking. He was loved and respected by men and animals. Every year on the anniversary of the death of Rieul, deer came and knelt before his tomb.
<b>Mamas of Cesarea</b> (2 September, Orth.) (17 August, Catholic)	(+275) Turkey	Mamas was rescued by an angel of the Lord who told him to withdraw to a high mountain in the desert. There he lived as a solitary monk, praying and fasting intensely. The wild beasts that lived in the wilderness would approach him, listening to him sing the Psalms and read the Gospels. In fact, he could feed on the milk of the wild goats, which seemed to see him as a companion. He made cheese from the milk, offering it free of charge to the poor of the area.
<b>Artemon de Laodicea</b> (24 March, Orthodox) (12 April, Catholics)	(+303) Syria	While on a road, the roman commander Patricius encountered saint Artemon, who was followed by six wild donkeys and two deer. When Patricius asked how he was able to control these wild beasts, Saint Artemon replied that he held them with the Word of Christ.
<b>Blasius of Sebastea</b> (3 February)	(+316) Armenia	He was a physician when he was chosen as the bishop of Sebastea. He made a cave in mount Argea into his episcopal residence and he healed humans as well as animals. He taught so well that even the animals would come listen to him.
<b>Paul of Thebes</b> (9 February, Oriental) (15 January, Orthodox) (10 January, Catholic)	(+345) Egypt	He was the first hermit. He sought God through contemplation of the desert wilderness. He lived in silence and prayer, having left behind all his possessions. Each day, a crow brought him some bread.

<b>Pacomius the Great</b> (15 May, Orthodox) (9 May, Catholics)	(292–346) Egypt	This former soldier was the founder of the first monasteries (in the East). He seemed to have power over nature: he stepped on snakes and scorpions without ever being bitten. Whenever he wanted to cross the Nile, crocodiles would line themselves up so he could cross over on their backs.
<b>Anthony the Great</b> (17 January)	(251–356) Egypt	Already at 20 years old, he took the Gospel seriously and gave all his goods to the poor and left to live in the desert as a hermit. According to Athanasius, Anthony used to say: “Without having learned letters, we believe in God, knowing through His works His providence over all things.” He shared the Good News with all who came to listen, humans and animals alike.
<b>Theodore the Sanctified</b> (24 January)	(+368) Egypt	Theodore was preaching in the desert in front of a crowd. Two snakes came to him and wrapped around his legs. The man grabbed, made a circle and put it on his chest. The faithful were horrified and amazed by the miracle. Both snakes stood there and listened to the words of the man. They did no harm to him. Theodore blessed them and they went into the desert sand.
<b>Macarius of Alexandria</b> (8 December)	(293-393) Egypt	He was a fruit merchant in Alexandria, but became a priest and retired to the desert. A huge lion stood there with a cub in her mouth. He saw that the lion was sick. He prayed and slowly stroked his hand on the cub’s eyes. The cub began to run and have fun pulling his cape, laughing and thanking the Lord. The lioness knelt to thank him and licked his feet.
<b>John Chrysostom</b> (13 November, Orth.) (13 September, Cath.)	(347-407) Turkey	He was the Archbishop of Constantinople and he wrote the Divine Liturgy still used today. “Surely we ought to show kindness and gentleness to animals for many reasons and chiefly because they are of the same origin as ourselves.” Homily XXIX, Homilies on the Epistle to the Romans
<b>Mary of Egypt</b> (2 April)	(+ 421) Egypt	She lived an ascetic life in the desert in contact with the wildlife. When she died, a lion began to dig an appropriate burial place. When he had finished, he turned around and left, as gentle as a lamb.
<b>Patrick of Ireland</b> (17 March)	(385–461) Ireland	He studied the elements of Celtic spirituality to find in them symbols that could represent a Christian mystery. So he chose the shamrock to teach about the Holy Trinity. Some of his prayers speak of the elements of nature.

<b>Gerasimus of the Jordan</b> (5 mars)	(+475) Israel (Palestine)	Gerasimus founded a monastery in the desert. He lived in the greatest poverty, eating bread and dates, and weaving palms for a living. It is said that one day Gerasimus encountered a desert lion with a reed in its paw. The good monk removed the reed and bandaged the wound. For five years the lion became Gerasimus' disciple, following him like a faithful dog. When the monks lost their donkey to pirates, it was the lion who did the work.
<b>Brigid of Kildare</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> February)	(451–525) Ireland	Thanks to her Celtic spirituality, she saw God's goodness in all Creation. The wild ducks flew to her and perched on her hands and shoulders when she called them. As an abbess, she would come out of her monastery to offer crosses woven from reeds.
<b>Aventine of Troyes</b> (4 February)	(+ 537) France	A furious bear, uttering frightful cries, came to the saint's cottage during the night. Aventine, frightened, began to pray and abandoned himself to the care of Providence. At daybreak he opened his door, and the bear, gentle and downcast with languor, licked him and presented one of its paws with a thorn in it, as if to beg him to pull it out. The man of God did him this service, washed the wound, rubbed it with a little oil and wrapped it in a small skin. The animal became familiar with him, and when he was healed, he withdrew into the woods. He protected a hunted doe and returned some caught fish to the water.
<b>Benedict of Nursia</b> (11 July)	(480–547) Italy	He wrote the Rule for monastic life, based on a balance between prayer and work ( <i>Ora et Labora</i> ). The monks had to feed themselves through farming. Inevitably, there was great respect for the rhythms of nature.
<b>Florentius of Nursia</b> (23 May )	(+548) Italy	Although he lived as a hermit in a cave, he had a hard time being so alone. One day, a big bear lay down at the cave entrance. By his friendly and gentle demeanor, the animal showed the holy man that he wanted to be his companion. He was welcomed joyfully and was trusted to guard the sheep.
<b>Columba of Iona</b> (9 June)	(521–597) Ireland	This monk took care of animals. One day, he gave special instructions to his brothers to take care of a heron that had fallen on the shore after an exhausting flight. He also loved a horse so much that it came close to him shortly before he died.
<b>Colombanus</b> (23 November)	(540-615) France	His name is derived from the word "dove". This Irish monk traveled Europe. He took refuge in a cave and lived with a bear. One day, surrounded by a pack of wolves, he blessed them and they fell at his feet and then left. When walking in the forest, the birds and squirrels would follow him.

<b>Kevin of Glendalough</b> (3 June)	(498–618) Ireland	On the first day of Lent, while Kevin was kneeling and praying with his arms outstretched, a blackbird landed on his hand and began to build a nest. Not wanting to frighten the bird, Kevin remained still and very quiet. He remained like this for the whole of Lent, praying constantly. The blackbird fed him nuts and berries. At the end of Lent, the last chick in the nest flew away and Kevin returned to the monastery for Easter. Brotherhood with creatures.
<b>Valery of Leuconay</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> April)	(550-622) France	The birds came to him because of his affection. If by chance one of the brothers approached and frightened the birds, he told them: "Let these innocent creatures eat their small seeds in peace." One day he gave the remains of his meal to a group of larks. A monk came calling and frightened birds flew away. Valery angry said to his brother: "You should be ashamed to disturb me while I was in confession with my friends the birds. Like you they are creatures of God?" .
<b>Melangell of Wales</b> (27 May)	(+641) Wales, UK	This woman was discovered in the woods by a hunter who was following a hare which had run under her dress to hide. The hunter, a prince, was so touched by her holiness, that he urged her to found an abbey, in woods that are protected today as an ecological site.
<b>Maxim the Confessor</b> (21 January 13 August)	(580-662) Georgia	In his questions to Thalassios he says: 'Christ is the greatest hidden mystery, the blessed end for which all things were created, an end prior to all existence. It was with this end in view that God called things into existence. Christ continues the fullness (pleroma) in which creatures accomplish their return to God. "
<b>Ghislain de Mons</b> (9 October)	(+680) Belgium	A large female bear, fleeing from dogs and knights on horseback, sought refuge next to him. He told King Dagobert that the bear had placed herself under the protection of God, so the king went away. The bear then took the sack containing the mass kit and fled into the forest. The place where he found her became the site of his monastery.
<b>Isaac of Niniveh</b> (28 January)	(640-700) Iraq	He was the bishop of Nineveh, but he retired to the desert to write. "I want a heart that burns with love for all of Creation, for humans, for birds, for beasts, for demons, for all creatures." <i>Sentences</i>
<b>Giles the Hermit</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> September)	(+720) France	A deer took refuge in his cave and lay down at his feet. An arrow, shot by a furious hunter who was aiming at the deer, pierced the saint's hand instead. Then King Flavius apologized to the saint who had protected the deer. The monk was persuaded to found a monastery in the valley.

<b>Hubert of Liège</b> (3 November)	(656-727) Belgium	On Good Friday morning, when the faithful were crowding the churches, Hubert sallied forth to the chase. As he was pursuing a magnificent deer, the animal turned and, as the pious legend narrates, he was astounded at perceiving a crucifix standing between its antlers, while he heard a voice saying: "Hubert turn to the Lord and lead a holy life."
<b>John of Damascus</b> (4 December)	(675-749) Syria	He entered the monastery of Mar Saba and wrote "The Source of Knowledge", which sums up the entire Byzantine theology. For St. John of Damascus, contemplating nature allows one to see the good, the beautiful and the true in creation. Freedom in human nature is often misused by humans, resulting in disharmony in the world with grave consequences. " Best quote: "The whole Earth is a loving icon of the Face of God."
<b>Isidore the Farmer</b> (15 May)	(+1130) Spain	He was a farmer in Madrid all his life. One day, his boss discovered him praying in a state of ecstasy, while the oxen continued to pull the plough as if guided by two angels. Amazed at what he saw, his boss was converted. He is the patron saint of farmers.
<b>Norbert of Xanten</b> (6 June)	(1080-1134) Germany	He was the founder of the monastery at Prémontré, and archbishop of Magdeburg. As an abbot, he made sure peace dwelled like in the garden of Eden. One day, a wolf tried to steal a lamb, and the saint spoke to him in such a manner that it lay it down unharmed and became part of the congregation. It did many chores and was loved by all.
<b>Bernard of Clairvaux</b> (20 August)	(1090-1153) France	This Cistercian monk founded 72 monasteries, is the author of many books on theology and is a doctor of the Church. "You will learn more in the forest than in books. The trees and the rocks will teach you what no master could reveal."
<b>Hildegard von Bingen</b> (17 September)	(1098–1179) Germany	This Benedictine cloistered nun combined scientific observation and mystical contemplation of nature. She studied the properties of plants in order to fabricate medicines. She was also a writer and composer and is recognized as a doctor of the Church.

<b>Hugh of Lincoln</b> (16 November)	(1135-1200) England, UK	He was gifted by the everlasting friendship of a swan. It guarded him while he slept. The swan would follow him about, and was his constant companion while he was at Lincoln. Hugh loved all the animals in the monastery gardens, especially a wild swan that would eat from his hand and follow him about and yet the swan would attack anyone else who came near him.
<b>Francis of Assisi</b> (4 October)	(1180-1226) Italy	The Canticle of the Creatures sums up his spirituality: "Be praised, my Lord, through brother Sun... sister Moon and the stars... brother Wind... sister Water... sister our mother Earth..." He also preached to the birds and tamed an enraged wolf that was terrorizing the village of Gubbio.
<b>Anthony of Padoua</b> (13 June)	(1195-1232) Italy	When people didn't listen to him, he turned to the water and began preaching to the fish, by counting the gifts God had given them: how he created them, how much freedom he had given them, and how he fed without their having to work. And the fish came close to the shore to listen.
<b>Clare of Assisi</b> (11 August)	(1194-1253) Italy	A disciple of Francis, she founded the Order of the Poor Ladies in a small monastery. She lived in extreme simplicity and praised God for everything. She tended a garden so that it became a place of welcome to humans and to birds.
<b>Bonaventure</b> (15 July)	(1221-1274) Italy	Bonaventure is one of the biographers of Francis of Assisi and was his successor as superior of the Order of Friars Minor. In his Itinerary of the Spirit to God, he says: "He whom so many created splendours do not illuminate is blind. He whom so many cries do not awaken is deaf. He who is not moved by all these works to praise God is a mute. He whom so many signs do not force to recognize the First Principle is a fool. "
<b>Andrew of Segni</b> (1er February)	(1230-1302) Italy	As a young Franciscan hermit, he withdrew into a cave away from everything. The animals of the forest visited him and he became their friends. His most faithful companions were the birds. He spoke to them and the birds responded with their songs.
<b>Gertrude the Great</b> (16 November)	(1256-1302) Germany	She is a Cistercian nun. She was attached to the dignity of being that every creature has sovereignly from the Creator. She was touched by a very strong feeling of piety whenever she saw one of them, bird or beast, suffering from some inconvenience. She immediately offered the suffering of a senseless being to God for His eternal praise, and wished that the Lord would deign to relieve it of its misery.



<b>Roch of Montpellier</b> (16 August)	(1340-1379) France	He caught the plague after going on a pilgrimage and then withdrew into the forest. Only a dog fed him by bringing him every day some bread snatched from his master's table. Their inseparable bond of friendship gave birth to a popular French expression "It's Saint Roch and his dog."
<b>Catherine of Siena</b> (29 April)	(1347-1380) Italy	In a vision, she heard the Lord say: "How can people see me feeding and nurturing the worm within the dry wood, pasturing the brute beasts, nourishing the fish in the sea, all the animals on the earth and the birds in the air, commanding the sun to shine on the plants and the dew to fertilize the soil, and not believe that I nourish them as well, my creatures made in my image and likeness? As a matter of fact, all this is done by my goodness to serve them. No matter where they turn, spiritually and materially they will find nothing but my deep burning charity and the greatest, gentle, true, perfect providence."
<b>Sergius de Radonezh</b> (25 September) (8 September)	(1313-1392) Russia	Men began to come to join his solitary life. The brothers elected Sergius as abbot. Although he would have preferred to remain a simple monk, Sergius consented to become an abbot and was later ordained to the priesthood. The Holy Trinity Monastery, near Moscow, is the residence of the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church.
<b>Theresa of Avila</b> (15 October)	(1515-1582) Spain	She was a Carmelite nun. "One day I saw how the Lord is found in all creatures. The comparison came to me of a sponge that is completely drenched in water. " <i>Various spiritual relationships</i>
<b>John of the Cross</b> (14 December)	(1542-1591) Spain	This monk and mystic preferred contemplation to intellectual analysis. "The fly that lands on honey can no longer fly, and the soul that thinks too much is no longer free for contemplation." He often prayed outdoor surrounded by nature.
<b>Francis de Sales</b> (24 January)	(1567-1622) Suisse	He was the Bishop of Geneva. Once, he was invited in Belley and the bishop wanted to hold a feast for him with fresh deer on the table. So a deer was brought in the orchard and many people gathered to see the hunt. Looking through the window, he squirmed while the deer ran for his life and was killed. He cried. At the table, he could not eat and said: "What I have seen today is like hell itself."

<b>Martin de Porrès</b> (3 November)	(1579 - 1639) Peru	This Dominican donado (“lay helper”) had a remarkable rapport with animals. His charity extended to beasts of the field and even to the vermin of the kitchen. He would excuse the raids of mice and rats on the grounds that they were underfed; he kept stray cats and dogs at his sister’s house.
<b>Joseph of Cupertino</b> (18 September)	(1603-1663) Italy	This Franciscan friar was known for his powers of healing and.. levitation during prayer, but he also had great relations with animals. While walking in the forest, a rabbit jumped under his habit. He refused that the hunter harm it. One day, he started singing and a flock of sheep came to him from every direction. After a storm, many sheep had been hit by hail and were on the ground. He healed them all.
<b>Kateri Tekakwitha</b> (14 July)	(1656-1680) Canada	It was in the forest, among the trees and the stillness, that the Great Spirit spoke to her heart. All of nature spoke to her of the Creator and she knew peace. Being in harmony with all of Creation was a native value she had learned from a young age.

Autres chrétiens près de la nature :

<b>Martin Luther</b> 18 février (luthérienne) 31 octobre (anglicane)	(1483-1546) Allemagne	He was an Augustinian friar who nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg; thus becoming the father of Protestantism and the reformer of the Church. He speaks of the Creation several times in his book <i>Table Talk</i> . "In all things, in the smallest creatures, and in their members, the omnipotence of God and his wonders shine forth clearly. What man can know how God creates and preserves all things, and makes them grow?" sct. 63 "While all God's creatures are good, and by God were created for good, mankind alone makes them evil, when they abuse them." sct. 799
<b>Johann Gerhard</b> (17 août, luthérienne)	(1582-1637) Allemagne	"There are two books from which we can learn and know God: the book of nature and the book of Scripture. In creatures we find the outer book which we must read, study and meditate upon continually. As many creatures are presented to us, so many masters are proposed to us." <i>The School of Faith</i> , J. Gerhard
<b>Yves de Paris</b> ()	(1588-1678) France	This Capuchin resists devout humanism by inviting the readers of his Christian Morals "to make a continual visit to the world to hear all the creatures that cry out to us that they are the works of God, to gather their voice, and joining to it the jubilations of our heart, to make a solemn sacrifice of them to the sovereign Majesty. "
<b>William Penn</b> (30 juillet)	(1644-1718) États-Unis	He is the father of the Quakers in England. He founded an egalitarian colony called Pennsylvania. He wanted to see an egalitarian colony flourish, in solidarity, in harmony with nature. "It would be happy if we studied nature more, and acted in accordance with nature; whose rules are few, simple and reasonable." <i>Some Fruits of Solitude</i>

<b>Jean Frédéric Oberlin</b> (2 juin, luthériens)	(1740-1826) France	He was the Protestant pastor of Ban-de-la-Roche in Alsace. He set himself to better the material and spiritual condition of this small disadvantaged village. At a wedding, he invited the couple to plant linden trees along a path (called the Wedding Alley). He encouraged the composting of waste, including for weavers. He forbade the animals to wander and graze in the woods, because grazing young trees prevented the renewal of the forest. He gave an award for energy savings. He encouraged several neighbours to share the common bread stove.
<b>Seraphim of Sarov</b> (19 juillet, orth. russe) (2 janvier, orth. et angl.)	(1759-1833) Russie	He began his monastic life in Sarov with such conviction that at his profession of faith he received the name Seraphim, "the ardent". He obtained permission to retire to the nearby forest for prayer and listening to the Scriptures. In the forest, Seraphim befriended all sorts of wild animals, especially a bear, which never harmed him. From the sinful man emanates "a smell of death" which excites fear or violence in the animals, but he who is transformed by his prayers and asceticism is delivered. He then returns to the paradisiacal state, the state of Adam who was bound without any confrontation with all the beasts, to which he had to give a name. After 37 years, he returned to the monastery. He had become a man who radiated Easter joy.
<b>John Muir</b> (21 avril, naissance)	(1838-1914) États-Unis	He was born in Scotland and his father was a Presbyterian preacher. The family moved to the United States. He helped establish Yosemite National Park and also founded the Sierra Club. "The universe would be incomplete without humans, but it would also be incomplete without the smallest microscopic creature that lives beyond our eyes and knowledge. From the dust of the earth, the primary elements, the Creator made Homo sapiens. From the same material, he made all other creatures, even if they seem harmful or insignificant to us. They are our companions, born of the earth. " <i>A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf</i> (Sierra Club Books, 1991)

<b>Pierre Teilhard de Chardin</b> (10 avril, décès)	(1881-1955) France	<p>He was a French Jesuit, a distinguished paleontologist and geologist, and well known as a religious writer. He was a fervent Christian mystic, a pastor who cared for souls, and a thinker who projected forward the meaning of the Gospel in the light of modern science and evolution.</p> <p>His masterful work, <i>The Human Phenomenon</i>, provides a deeper understanding of the sacredness of the earth, the interdependence of all creatures, and the important role of the human as co-creator.</p> <p>"The future belongs to those who give reason to the next generation of hope. "</p> <p>"One day, having mastered the winds, waves, tides and gravity, we will harness the energies of love for God. Then, for the second time in the history of the world, we will have discovered fire. "</p>
<b>Amphilochios Makris de Patmos</b> (16 avril, décès)	(1889-1970) Grèce	<p>He was a monk from the island of Patmos. For those who came to him for confession, he often assigned the penance of planting a tree on the island. His ministry caused a forest to grow and demolished the sins of many. During the long summer drought, he would go around the island to water the young trees. Where there was a barren slope, there is now a thick, flourishing woodland.</p> <p>"Do you know that God has given us one more commandment that is not found in the Scriptures? It is the commandment to love trees. He who does not love trees does not love Christ. When you plant a tree, you plant hope, you plant peace, you plant love and you receive God's blessing. "</p> <p><i>Orthodox Christian Ecology</i>, by Kallistos Ware</p>

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