

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.

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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

**SIGN UP free for  
Link to Liturgy**



[1] Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI, Chrism Mass, Holy Thursday, 2012

Information in this packet has been taken from usccb.org and suggested links from their site.  
<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/year-of-faith/saints-for-the-year-of-faith.cfm>

# Quick Connect

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## **Gospel Reading – Luke 4:21-30 – Daily Roman Missal**

Jesus began speaking in the synagogue, saying: “Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.” And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They also asked, “Isn’t this the son of Joseph?” He said to them, “Surely you will quote me this proverb, ‘Physician, cure yourself,’ and say, ‘Do here in your native place the things that we heard were done in Capernaum.’” And he said, “Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But Jesus passed through the midst of them and went away.

## **Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings**

**From a letter to the Church of Smyrna by Saint Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr**

*Christ has called us to his kingdom and glory*

From Ignatius, known as Theophorus, to the Church of God the Father and of Jesus Christ, his beloved, at Smyrna in Asia, wishing you all joy in an immaculate spirit and the Word of God. By his mercy you have won every gift and lack none, filled as you are with faith and love, beloved of God and fruitful in sanctity. I celebrate the glory of Jesus Christ as God, because he is responsible for your wisdom, well aware as I am of the perfection of your unshakeable faith. You are like men who have been nailed body and soul to the cross of Jesus Christ, confirmed in love by his blood.

In regard to the Lord, you firmly believe that he was *of the race of David according to the flesh*, but God’s son by the will and power of God; truly born of the Virgin and baptized by John, *that all justice might be fulfilled*; truly nailed to a cross in the flesh for our sake under Pontius Pilate and the Tetrarch Herod, and of his most blessed passion we are the fruit. And thus, by his resurrection he raised up a standard over his

saints and faithful ones for all time (both Jews and Gentiles alike) in the one body of his Church. For he endured all this for us, for our salvation; and he really suffered, and just as truly rose from the dead.

As for myself, I am convinced that he was united with his body even after the resurrection. When he visited Peter and his companions, he said to them: *Take hold of me, touch me and see that I am not a spirit without a body.* Immediately they touched him and believed, clutching at his body and his very spirit. And for this reason they despised death and conquered it. In addition, after his resurrection, the Lord ate and drank with them like a real human being, even though in spirit he was united with his Father.

And so I am giving you serious instruction on these things, dearly beloved, even though I am aware that you believe them to be so.

### **Introduction and Implementation - Lesson and Discussion**

Jesus is the Word made flesh. Many times words are difficult to understand and so translations of the word are necessary. Pope Benedict XVI tells us that the Saints are authentic “translations” of the Eternal Word, Jesus Christ. Saint Paul urges the Christian to be an imitator of Christ, a translation of Christ to each other and to the world.

“Dear friends, it is clear that configuration to Christ is the precondition and the basis for all renewal. But perhaps at times the figure of Jesus Christ seems too lofty and too great for us to dare to measure ourselves by him. The Lord knows this. So he has provided “translations” on a scale that is more accessible and closer to us. For this same reason, Saint Paul did not hesitate to say to his communities: *Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.* For his disciples, he was a “translation” of Christ’s manner of life that they could see and identify with. Ever since Paul’s time, history has furnished a constant flow of other such “translations” of Jesus’ way into historical figures. We priests can call to mind a great throng of holy priests who have gone before us and shown us the way: from Polycarp of Smyrna and Ignatius of Antioch, from the great pastors Ambrose, Augustine and Gregory the Great, through to Ignatius of Loyola, Charles Borromeo, John Mary Vianney and the priest-martyrs of the 20th century, and finally Pope John Paul II, who gave us an example, through his activity and his suffering, of configuration to Christ as “gift and mystery”. The saints show us how renewal works and how we can place ourselves at its service. And they help us realize that God is not concerned so much with great numbers and with outward successes, but achieves his victories under the humble sign of the mustard seed.”[1] The American Saints give the American faithful an authentic translation of Jesus, a translation that is both unique to America and the American spirit. As Americans, we walk the same ground, serve in the same institutions, are obedient to the same laws, and enjoy the same freedoms as the American Saints.

**How are the American Saints imitators of Christ in regards to today’s Gospel?** Two examples have been given under each heading.

### **What are the amazing grace filled words and actions of the American Saints?**

*And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth*

Mother Cabrini in her work of founding schools, hospitals and charitable works of every kind, would cross the ocean thirty times, bringing bands of young Italian Sisters to North and South America. This work would have her travel all across American, from New York City to Seattle, from New Orleans to Chicago.

Blessed Junipero Serra, who is called the Apostle to California, is known for founding the great mission of San Juan Capistrano, in California as well as 21 missions on the West Coast from San Diego to San Francisco. Anywhere we see a Saint’s name on the West Coast, it is likely that Blessed Junipero Serra was there.

### **What were the persecutions and hardships faced by the American Saints?** *They rose up, drove him out of the town*

Mother Théodore Guérin encountered prejudice against Catholics and, especially, against Catholic women religious; betrayals; misunderstandings; the separation of the Congregation in Indiana from the one in Ruillé; a devastating fire that destroyed an entire harvest leaving the sisters destitute and hungry, and frequent life-threatening illnesses. Still she persevered, desiring only that “In all and everywhere may the will of God be done.”

St. Isacc Jogues and his brother Jesuit missionaries were whipped, bitten, and tormented in the most barbarous ways imaginable. St. Isaac Jogues became a living martyr, watching his friends die around him and being constantly threatened by death himself.

### **How in many cases were the American Saints driven out of their native lands? How were the American Saints and or their mission not accepted?** *Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place*

When priests came to the village, Saint Kateri was drawn by their teachings, and converted at the age of 19, heedless of the anger of her relatives. She was disowned and persecuted by her own people. Because she refused to work on Sundays, she was denied meals on that day. The persecution by her own native people led to her eventually flee so that she could practice her faith in freedom.

When Venerable Pierre Toussaint was in his early twenties, his master brought him to the United States with several other slaves, to avoid civil disturbance in Haiti. He was driven out of his native land of Haiti due to civil unrest, which providential brought him to New York City where God would use his life to bless many.