

April 11

St. Stanislaus

1030–1079 • Poland

When Stanislaus was bishop, King Bolesław II ruled over Poland. The king cared more about wealth and power than doing what was right. Bishop Stanislaus condemned the king's sinfulness, and the king became his enemy.

According to legend, Bishop Stanislaus purchased a plot of land for the Church from a farmer. But when the farmer died, the king wanted revenge against Bishop Stanislaus and took away the land. The king knew that Bishop Stanislaus could not prove that he had paid for the land since the farmer was dead, so he claimed that the farmer had never sold his land to Bishop Stanislaus and that it belonged to the farmer's sons.

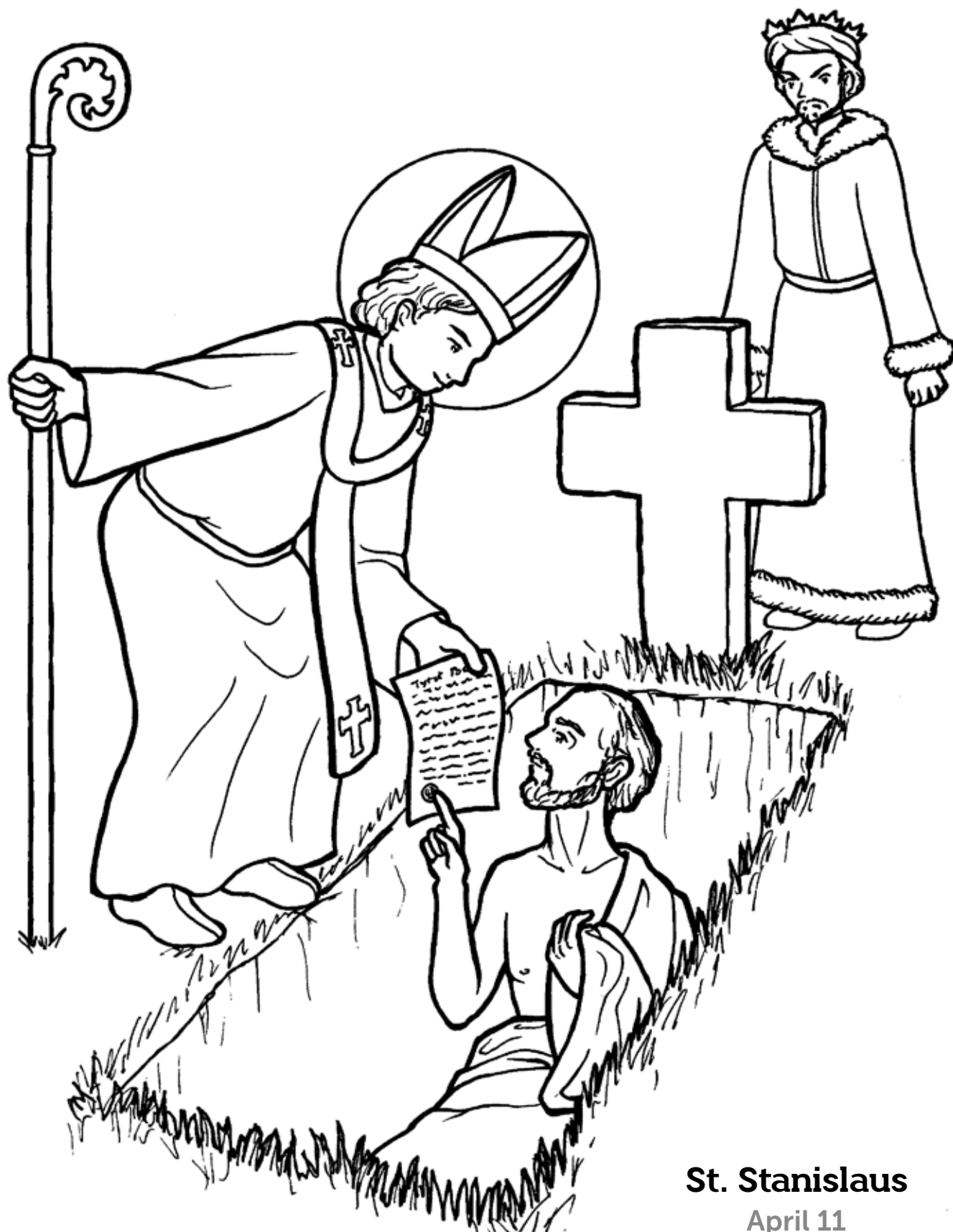
Bishop Stanislaus was not worried. He told the king that, in three days, he would prove that he had purchased the land.

The king smiled. He did not believe Bishop Stanislaus.

Bishop Stanislaus prayed and fasted. On the third day he went to the farmer's grave. He ordered men with shovels to dig up the earth. Then, to everyone's amazement, the farmer rose from his grave and told the king that he had sold the land to Bishop Stanislaus! The king was furious, but he had no choice but to return the land.

Bishop Stanislaus continued to condemn the king's sinfulness, and he ultimately excommunicated King Bolesław II because the king's sins harmed his people. To excommunicate someone means to cut him off from the Church so that they can no longer receive the sacraments. An excommunication can be lifted when that person repents of his sin. But King Bolesław II did not want to repent. He ordered his soldiers to kill Bishop Stanislaus. Not a single one of his soldiers obeyed the king's order. They would not lift a sword against the holy bishop.

The king was furious. He decided he would kill Stanislaus himself. He found the bishop as he was saying the Holy Mass and struck him down. Bolesław II fled the country because of his evil act, and Bishop Stanislaus became a martyr for defending the Faith. St. Stanislaus, help me to stand up against injustice.



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