

THE LIVES OF SAINTS



Retell a story that you heard today. Use your voice to express the range of emotions, make sound effects, and change accents as the characters speak. Use your hands, face, and body language to act out the story. Use your imagination to bring the story to life. Visit my web page and click on the library article to learn more about How to Tell a Story. www.foxtalesint.com

Who is your Patron Saint? What saint shares your birthday or your name? Who is your favorite saint? Choose one or write several stories about several saints. Research their lives on-line or at the library.



Make a short list of key facts: When were they born? Where? What are the most important events in his or her life? Did they perform any miracles? Why are they a saint? More than a list of facts, what are the two or three stories that best encapsulate their life story? Maybe it is just one important moment. How can you tell this story in a way that invites listeners to be drawn into that moment? Do not tell listeners what to think or what is the moral of the story, simply tell the story and allow the listener to learn from the life of the saint.

In writing the story, first write a few sentences about the main character, what they look like, and if you can find them, maybe a few quotes to get sense of how they talk. Then write a few sentences about where they lived, time and place. Close your eyes, use your imagination, use all five senses to describe the setting.

Then make an outline of the story, beginning, middle, and end; what problems did they face and how did they solve them? What was their relationship to God? How can you set the stage and build up to the miracle or crisis? To quote one of my favorite poets, 'be like a fox and leave a few tracks in the wrong direction.' ...yes, no, maybe so... Each saint was faced with a difficult challenge. How can you tell the story so you do not give away their choice too soon, but lead the audience into the difficulty and allow them to face the challenge, think about their answer, and then tell them what the saint decided to do.

Answer all of these questions and use your answers as an outline, then turn your research and notes into a story. Write a rough draft. Tell the story to several folks and then rewrite the story. Watch the audience watch the story: when they react well stretch those parts of the story; when they look confused explain it; and if they looked less than excited change it! Use rehearsal as a way of rewriting your story!

Catholic churches and cathedrals are filled with statues, stained glass, and paintings of saints. Each saint has a symbol or tool that helps to identify them. Is it a net for a fisher of men or a hammer for a carpenter? Tour your church and make a list of saints and their symbols. Each student could dress up and play a different saint. Your class could offer a tour for other classes, like a wax museum that comes to life!

A much easier choice is to find a good children's picture book about your favorite saint. Learn the story, practice with your family, and then tell the story to your class.

