

3. Kingdom of God

Objectives:

- Explore what is meant by God’s Kingdom
- Understand how Jesus’ teaching: “the Kingdom of God is close at hand” affects the world we live in
- Reflect upon our individual role in being witness to, and building, God’s Kingdom.

0.00	Faith in Action Prayer <i>Say together the Faith in Action Prayer</i>
0.05	Church Story CCC 2447 - The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbour in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. the corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God This session, we’re going to look more in depth at the works of mercy and how we can live those out in order to build the Kingdom of God.
0.10	The Good News Not just a quote from the Catechism though – actually from Jesus Scripture Matthew 25: 31-40
0.15	Activity and Church Story In the scripture Jesus tells us we need to do these things – but how? Split into three groups to look at 3 of the works in more detail, with a saint attached to each (See attached document) and a charity that performs this work of mercy Feeding the Hungry – shopping list – as a group, given a shopping list of items and how much they cost from Tesco. Their job is to feed a family of 4 for a week on £100. Try again on £50. This is obviously a hard task, but one that many families face – sometimes with less than £50. What can we do to help? (Foodbanks etc) Around the world many still are suffering from malnutrition, charities like Marys Meals set up to help stop that. Saint: St Andrew Drink to the thirsty – Water Quiz (see attached) Young people need to match the fact to the statistic. Some of the statistics are quite shocking, but whilst it is so easy for us to turn on a tap and get running water, for some people around the world it’s obviously not that easy. Talk about work of CAFOD building water systems for communities. Saint: St Peter Claver Visit the sick – operation game Nice game for us, but doctors and nurses look after some genuinely sick people and do so maintaining the dignity of the person when they’re at their weakest. Talk about work of care homes and hospices. Saint: St Martin de Porres
0.40	Personal Story This time can either be a discussion time, or simply some time of personal reflection when young people can make notes in their journal. Some prompts for any discussion or notes could be: What does the Kingdom of God look like? What does ‘thy Kingdom come’ mean? If you put your faith into action what would you do?
	Does your faith and beliefs change the way you behave? Does your relationship with God affect the choices you make? Can certain actions demolish the Kingdom of God?
1.00	Liturgy Corporal Works of Mercy Meditation

WATER QUIZ

884 million people	Lack access to water
159 million people	Depend on surface water to meet their basic needs
2.3 billion people	Lack access to a toilet
60% of people in the world	Do not have access to safely managed sanitation
160 million children	Suffer from stunting and chronic malnutrition linked to water and sanitation
Nearly 570 million children	Lack basic drinking water at their school
1 million people	Number that die each year from water and sanitation related diseases
1/3 of all schools in the world	Lack access to basic water and sanitation
\$260 billion	Is lost globally each year due to lack of basic water and sanitation
\$28.4 billion	Is how much it would cost per year to extend basic water and sanitation services around the world.

Other interesting facts:

More people have a mobile phone than a toilet.

Women and girls spend 200 million hours every day collecting water, which means they are not spending it working, caring for family or attending school.

For every year a girl can stay in school, her income can increase by 15-25%

Universal access to basic water and sanitation would result in \$18.5 billion in economic benefits each year from avoided deaths alone.

It will take 3 times more than what is currently being invested to achieve universal access to safely managed water and sanitation

SAINT PROFILES

Name: St Andrew

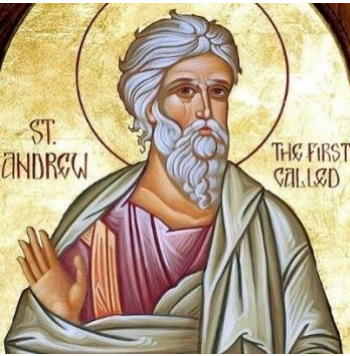
Feast Day: 30th November

Birthplace: Bethsaida, on the Sea of Galilee

Born: Early 1st Century

Died: Mid to late 1st Century (crucified in Patras)

Canonised: Apostle – known as a saint in the early church

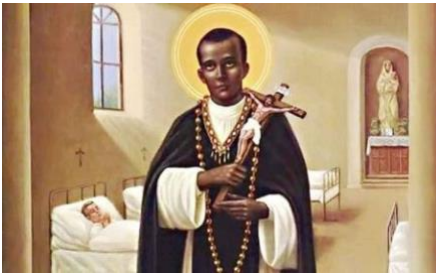


Patron Saint of: Scotland, and many other countries; fishermen, ropemakers and performers.

The life of St. Andrew: Andrew was one of Jesus' twelve disciples. In John's Gospel, Andrew is described as being a disciple of John the Baptist, who brings his brother to Jesus. Andrew was a disciple with faith, who took people to Jesus. John 6:1-13 describes a time when a large crowd of people was following Jesus. Jesus asked Philip, a disciple, where they could buy bread for the people to eat. Philip answered, "It would take six months' wages to buy enough bread for each person to have a bite!" However, Andrew had noticed a boy with a packed lunch. Andrew spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus accepted the bread and fish, gave thanks, and distributed the food.

Everyone had as much as they wanted, and there were twelve baskets of food left over. Church tradition teaches that St Andrew preached in many places in Eastern Europe, until finally being martyred in Patras, which is now in Greece. Early texts suggest that St Andrew was crucified on the same type of cross as Jesus: but a tradition developed that he was crucified on an X shaped cross, as he did not believe he should be crucified on the same cross as Jesus. This is why he is often shown with an X-shaped cross, and why the flag of Scotland has that white X on a blue background. In this Year of Faith, Andrew's example can inspire us. He was not overwhelmed when he saw the crowd and heard Jesus' request for food. Instead, he did the little he could, giving Jesus the opportunity to share and multiply the loaves and fish. Can I show the same faith in my life?

A thought to take away: Andrew brought other people to Jesus, and trusted Jesus in order to follow him. His action of bringing a boy with only five loaves and two fish resulted in many people being fed. If we take a small step in faith to try to address issues of hunger, who knows what the result will be?



Canonised: 1962 by Pope John XXIII

Name: St. Martin de Porres **Feast Day:** 3rd November

Birthplace: Lima, Peru

Born: 1579

Died: 3rd November 1639

Patron Saint of: Those seeking inter-racial

harmony; all who work for social justice.

The life of St. Martin: Martin was born in Lima, Peru, in 1579. His father was a Spanish nobleman and his mother was a freed slave from Panama. For a number of years, Martin's father left the family and ignored Martin because of his appearance – in looks, Martin was very like his mother, and his father found this difficult to accept.

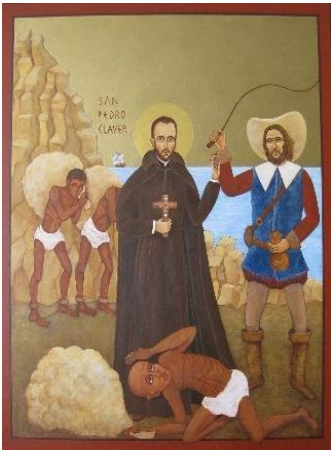
The family was very poor, but despite all these difficulties, Martin grew up as good young man who prayed and tried to live out the teachings of Jesus. He was sent to learn the trade of a barber, which in those days included learning surgical and medical skills. Martin's father finally decided to take care of his son's education, but Martin wanted to join the Dominican Priory of the Rosary in Lima, as a brother.

He soon proved to be a wonderful friar, extraordinarily kind, humble and holy. Before long, he began to work miracles, curing so many people that everyone in Lima would send for Brother Martin when there was sickness.

Martin treated people of all races and colours, showing no discrimination. He recognised all people as his sisters and brothers in Christ. He founded an orphanage and was generous to sick people outside the priory. Many gave large amounts of money to Martin to help with these ventures. Even animals were looked after by this generous-hearted saint.

Martin had a very humble opinion of himself, calling himself "Brother Broom". When he died, this beloved saint was mourned by all. He was carried to his tomb by bishops and noblemen, who wanted to honour this humble and holy brother, whose life had been such an example to them all.

A thought to take away: We are all part of that great communion of saints, people throughout the world and in every century, whose lives witnessed to the love of God in this world, and who continue to be an example to us. Pope Benedict reminded us that we are all called to be saints. How am I going to be a witness for social justice? How am I going to love God and my neighbour? How can I live as a saint?



Name: St. Peter Claver **Feast Day:** 9th

September **Birthplace:** Lleida, Catalonia

Born: 26th June 1580

Died: 8th September 1654

Canonised: 15th January 1888 by Pope Leo IX

Patron Saint of: Slaves, Colombia, Race relations, Ministry to African-Americans, Seafarers

The life of St. Peter: In 1610, St. Peter Claver arrived in the city of Cartagena (in modern day Columbia), where the slave trade flourished. The son of a wealthy Catalonian farmer, Claver entered the Jesuits at the age of 20 in 1601. Nine years later, with six years of formation still to go, he asked to serve in the Spanish missions. His superiors consented, permitting him to complete his studies in South America. Upon his arrival, Claver witnessed the grim plight of the Africans and vowed to dedicate his ministry to their care. Claver based his ministry primarily in Cartagena, where large ships, densely packed with slaves, arrived regularly in the harbour. The conditions of the slave ships were so horrific that an estimated one-third of the men and women aboard died in transit. Knowing this, Claver didn't wait for the slavers to unload their cargo. Instead, he boarded as soon as the ships docked, heading straight to the hold to give the Africans something to drink. After they had been moved to the slave market, he continued to move among them, distributing brandy and bread. As he cared for the slaves' bodily needs, Claver also cared for their spiritual needs. With the help of a translator, he assured them of their dignity and told them of a God who loved them, baptising all who asked for it. Then, in the months when few ships arrived in the port, he travelled to the plantations, meeting with those he'd baptized, giving further instruction in the Faith and advocating for their humane treatment. When he visited those plantations, he always insisted on staying in the slave quarters. By the time of St. Peter Claver's death, in 1654, it is estimated that he baptized more than 300,000 slaves and quenched the thirst of countless more.

A thought to take away: St. Peter reminded those that he ministered to that they had a dignity and a value and worth by simply offering them a cup of water and praying for them. How could you show others their value and worth?

Corporal Works Meditation

Let's take a moment to get comfortable now. Make sure you're in a position where you can be comfortable and still for the next 10 minutes. Let's quiet ourselves. Slowly and quietly breathe in to the count of 5. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) Hold your breath for one second. Now slowly and quietly breathe out to the count of 5. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) Let's do that again. (repeat)

Now, imagine that everyone else in this room just vanished and that you are all alone, enjoying the quiet. Before long, Jesus walks in and sits next to you. He asks how you are doing. Talk to him.

He explains that he is here today to ask you to reveal his presence to others. You ask him, "Jesus, what do I have to do to reveal your presence to others?" Jesus says, "The most important thing to do is to care for the needs of others. I want you to show mercy to others by tending to their needs whenever you can." You ask Jesus, "What do you mean? What kind of needs?"

Jesus says, "Let me tell you about the needs that people have and how you can help them: I want you to recognize when people are hungry and thirsty. Start in your own home. People don't have to be starving to be hungry. Think about how you can help at meal time in your family. Help set the table. Help to prepare the food in the kitchen. Help to clean up afterwards. But also, keep in mind all the people in the world who don't have food and water like you do. Pay attention to how you can help with food banks, work at a soup kitchen, or give money to people who feed the hungry.

"I want you to shelter the homeless. You are very lucky to have a good roof over your head. Take care of your home. Help your neighbours to care for their homes. Pay attention to some of the ways that you can support people who work with the homeless. Homeless shelters need donations of soap, shampoo, and other personal items...maybe you can help by donating some of these.

"I want you to clothe those who have no clothing. Again, you are very lucky to have warm clothes and shoes on your feet. Thank your family for providing you with clothing and try not to get hung up on spending a lot of money on clothes. Go through your drawers and your closet and pack up some clothing that you can give to someone less fortunate.

"I want you to visit the sick and imprisoned. I know that it might be difficult to visit people in jail; and hospitals even have restrictions. But there are other ways you can be present to people. You can call or send a card to someone who is sick. If you have relatives that can't get out of the house often because of their age or sickness, spend some time with them.

People don't have to be in jail to be imprisoned. Some people are imprisoned in their own homes because of sickness. Of course, if any of your friends are sick, be sure to visit them or call them—it will mean a lot to them.

“I want you to be of help to others who are suffering the death of a loved one. I know it's not fun to go to a wake or a funeral, but it means so much to the people who are grieving just to know that you care and that they are not alone. If you have grandparents or other relatives who are widows or widowers, spend some time with them. They can be very lonely missing their loved ones who have died. You probably even have friends who have lost a loved one. Be sure to show that you care and that you are there for them.

“Finally, I want you to do what you can to help the poor. You might not have a lot of money of your own, but you'd be surprised to know just how many people in the world have far less than you have. Do what you can to share with those in need. Save your change in a jar at home and every once in a while, donate it to those who work with the poor. Instead of buying something for yourself, every once in a while, buy something for the poor or give the money to help those who are poor.”

Jesus pauses and then says, “I'm not asking you to change the world. But if you and all of my followers do what you can, the world will change. I want you to do works of mercy: feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, bury the dead, and give to the poor. Will you consider revealing my presence to the world?”

Tell him that you want to reveal his presence to others but that you need his help. Talk to Jesus about what's keeping you from truly revealing his presence to others.

Jesus knows that it's time for you to move on now. He asks if there's anything else you want to say to him or ask him. Take time to do that now.

Thank Jesus for this time together. Watch as he walks out of the room. Spend a quiet moment now with the Holy Spirit.