



Saint of the Month



Saint Homobonus Tucenghi of Cremona Ca. 1117– November 13, 1197

Goal: To provide a lesson for children about a saint or saints who exemplify a deep relationship with God and the ability to share it with others.

Materials Needed: This lesson plan, accompanying story, and any necessary materials for follow up activities.

Objectives:

1. To assist children in developing the understanding that all of God's people are called to a life of holiness.
2. To help children respond appropriately to the question: What is a saint?
One who:
 - is proclaimed by the Church, after their death, to have lived a life of holiness
 - teaches others about Jesus by their example
 - lives like Jesus
3. To introduce one of our Church's saints, Saint Homobonus Tucenghi of Cremona, (say Huh-MAW-buh-nus Too-CHEN-gee of Creh-MOH-nah) telling as much of, or parts of, the story that you feel will interest the children at your grade level.
4. To learn that Homobonus was a saint because he lived in a way that respected the Gospel of Jesus
5. To learn that we are called by God to share the Gospel with our lives
6. To help the children develop listening skills
7. To expand children's vocabulary, as appropriate: **Latin, merchant, piety, prostrate, apostolate, underprivileged, avarice, epicenter, charity, social justice, influential, centerpiece**

Procedure:

1. Prepare the children to listen to Homobonus' story. (Have map posted or globe available)
2. Read, or have read, the attached story of Saint Homobonus. Elaborate/abbreviate as necessary for time constraints or age level of listeners.
3. Pray: Beloved and charitable St. Homobonus, your honesty and good will served your community and the Lord well. Help me follow your example and not give in to temptations of greed and easy shortcuts that wound others. I ask for guidance in my work, so that I may prosper by choosing virtue over avarice. Help me to willingly share my blessings with the underprivileged, as you did so that all may have what they need. Amen
1. Use the follow up questions (below).
2. Present follow-up activity below (optional). Any follow-up activity can be substituted.

Saint Homobonus Tucenghi of Cremona

At birth, Saint Homobonus was given what some may have considered a huge burden to live up to: his own name! In Latin, Homobonus means "Good Man"; Homobonus set out on his name's path early in life and never looked back. The son of a tailor and a wealthy cloth merchant, he grew up working in the family business, married and had children of his own. When his father passed away, Homobonus inherited the family business and soon made it prosper even further.

At the same time, our saint was striving to grow in piety and generosity to the underprivileged of his village. His

name was known far and wide as someone who could be counted on for daily charity; his house became the epicenter for his main apostolate: service activities. The poor slept and ate there, received medical care, and even were given jobs. Sometimes their personal care giver was none other than Homobonus himself, upon returning from his regular evening Mass.

It was known that his wife was not the happiest person with this arrangement. Though the family was well off, they lived and dressed simply as Homobonus gave much of their money away. His answer to her complaints was to smile, pray for her and to continue his works—both making more money and giving it away.

Homobonus' charity and generosity made him well known and influential in the local area. He used his position to advocate for others. He knew that money and position were gifts from God and that he must use them in His service. Homobonus also knew that performing acts of social justice and charity without prayer is simply social work. His faith was the centerpiece of his life. Every evening, when he attended Mass, he would prostrate himself on the stone floor (there were no pews in those days) at the Gloria and stay there until the Gospel. On November 13, 1197, he did just that. It was only when he didn't rise for the Gospel that his fellow churchgoers realized he had finally received his eternal reward—Homobonus had gone home to God.

Follow-up Questions: (add, omit, re-word as appropriate for your grade level)

1. Our Catholic faith teaches us that money and material wealth will not make us happy, it is only by sharing those blessings that we can be truly happy. Have you ever had an experience of sharing something you would have rather kept, only to find yourself happier for sharing it? Discuss the feelings.
2. Homobonus did not just hire doctors, nurses or social workers, he tended to peoples' needs himself. How do you think this made a difference to those people? To Homobonus?
3. Interestingly, Homobonus is a Patron Saint of businessmen, not of the poor. What do you think of that?

Follow-up Activities:

Younger students:

1. Saint Homobonus had a practice of daily prayer and daily Mass. This month, honor this holy man by saying a decade of the World Mission Rosary in your class every day (schools) or every time you meet (rel. ed.)
2. Homobonus served the poor of his community. During November, collect personal toiletry items (shampoo, soap, toothpaste, etc.) for a local homeless shelter. Draw cards for the clients there telling them about Saint Homobonus.

Older students:

1. In Latin, Homobonus means "Good Man". Give yourself a two word name or title that you'd like to live up to during this month of Thanksgiving (i.e. praying girl = orantes puella). Make a small sign for your desk to remind you of your monthly motto.
2. There are many references in the Bible of service to the poor through our faith. Find them and write them on cards the colors of the World Mission Rosary to make an "inspiration" bulletin board. Set up an altar on a table under the bulletin board with a world map, a crucifix, a bible and a World Mission Rosary. Place a container with a lid on the altar (a clean coffee can, a shoe box) and encourage students to write how they "lived" one of the inspirational sayings.

All students:

1. Saint Homobonus was someone who lived fully in this world, accepting the gifts that came from his own hard work all the while realizing that it was only possible because his gifts were from God. Make a list what you feel your talents are and how you may be able to use them in the service of others this month. Make a plan to do one of these acts of service. Write an essay, a song or draw a picture of how you felt before, during and after the service.