



Saint of the Month



Saint Isaac Jogues, SJ and the North American Martyrs Feast Day: October 19

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 Isaac Jogues, (say Jōges) telling as much of, or parts of, the story that you feel will interest the children at your grade level.
4. To learn that Isaac Jogues 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: **New France, Canada, Huron, Mohawk, Jesuit, disease, missionaries, piety, captivity, hardship, martyr, endurance, companions, Black Robes, cassocks,**

Procedure:

1. Prepare the children to listen to Isaac Jogues's story. (Have map posted or globe available)
2. Read, or have read, the attached story of Saint Isaac Jogues. Elaborate/abbreviate as necessary for time constraints or age level of listeners.
3. **Pray:** God our Father, you consecrated the first beginnings of the faith in North America by the preaching and martyrdom of Saint Isaac Jogues and his companions. By the help of our prayers, may the Christian faith continue to grow throughout the world. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.
4. Use the follow up questions (below).
5. Present follow-up activity below (optional). Any follow-up activity can be substituted.

Saint Isaac Jogues and Companions

On October 19, we celebrate the feast day of St. Isaac Jogues (1607-1646) and his seven companions, the first martyrs of North America. A martyr is someone who gives up his or her life for their beliefs—in this case, their Catholic faith. Each of these eight men served the Native Americans in “New France”, modern day Canada. Their stories speak of the faith, courage, piety and endurance. They survive to this day because of letters written back to their Jesuit superiors in France, detailing their missionary work with people who called them the “Black Robes” for the long black cassocks they wore.

Isaac Jogues was born in Orleans, France. His father died when he was very young; his mother raised him to be an

“apostle” - to follow God’s path for him. Well educated and a man of deep faith, he was 35 years old when he was sent as a missionary to the New World to proclaim the Gospel to the Huron and Algonquin tribes. Upon arrival in “New France” he met up with fellow Jesuit Fr. Jean de Brebeuf, who taught him the language of the Hurons. He also taught Jogues many practical tips that missionaries to this day need to learn: eat with the people, make camp with them, care for the ill in view of the “medicine man’s feelings”, so as not to offend any local customs. Jogues was a quick study and was soon on his way up river to the peaceable Hurons.

Along the route, his group was ambushed by the Mohawks, a more war-like tribe. Isaac Jogues was taken prisoner, beaten and tortured. He suffered the loss of two fingers. He lived as a slave to his captors for more than a year before some Dutch settlers in the town of New Amsterdam (now New York City) heard of his predicament and ransomed him; he was put on a boat back to France where he surprised friends and family – he was alive!

After spending time recuperating, Jogues was determined to return to his mission. He did so as part of a peace delegation between tribes, stating, "Oh, how I should regret to lose so glorious an occasion, when it may depend only on me that some souls be saved! I hope that (God’s) goodness, which has not abandoned me in the hour of trial, will aid me still." In the end, peace was not to come. Isaac Jogues was recaptured and killed as he carried the Peace of Christ to others.

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

1. Saint Isaac Jogues could have stayed in France after he regained his health. Why did he return to “New France”? How did the lessons from his mother affect his decision?
2. Why is it important that the Jesuit missionaries learned the language of the Hurons, ate with them and made camp with them? Discuss modern day missionaries going to a new location. Would they do the same? Why?

Follow-up Activities:

Younger students:

1. In computer class, look up the Jesuits. Who is their most famous member right now? What connection does he have to the Missionary Childhood Association, which is a Pontifical Mission Society?
2. Make a class altar for the Saint Isaac Jogues. Include a Native American cloth, a bible, a World Mission Rosary, and palms (signifying a martyr’s death). Pray the prayer to the Saint Isaac Jogues and the North American Martyrs daily.

Older students:

1. Saint Isaac Jogues is one of eight North American Martyrs canonized together and celebrated on October 19. Research the other seven. Tell their story in poem, story or skit.
2. Make a Native American totem pole with Christian Symbols that Saint Isaac Jogues may have used to teach the Native Americans about our faith.

All students:

1. Go to this link: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/native-american/> to read more from our US Bishop’s Conference on native Americans in the Catholic Church. Click on the links in the left column under “Native American”.
2. Like all missionaries, Saint Isaac Jogues had a dream that everyone would come to know and love Jesus. Using a white paper plate, yarn in the colors of the World Mission Rosary, a hole punch, beads and cut out symbols of our faith (a cross, a star, an angel, etc.) make a Catholic dream catcher that would show what a missionary would want the people with which s/he lived to learn about God. Directions are included.



Dream Catcher



Mission Dream Catcher Activity Saint Isaac Jogues

Materials Needed:

- paper plate
- yarn, any color
- hole puncher
- craft beads
- craft feathers
- color markers
- scissors



Instructions:



1. Cut out the center of the plate. Leave a rim of 2 inches all around the paper plate.



2. Punch holes in the rim of the paper plate, about ½ inch apart.



3. Measure your yarn in 5-6 ft long pieces. Tie one end of the yarn to any one of the holes on the rim of the paper plate.



4. Weave the yarn up, over, and all around the paper plate from one hole to the next one. You can make your pattern any way you like. Make sure to loop through each of the punched holes.



5. Once all of the holes are threaded with the yarn, tie a knot at the end of the yarn at the last hole.

6. Punch 3 more holes in the paper plate at the bottom of the plate.



7. Cut 3 more pieces of yarn, about 5 inches long each.

8. Take each piece of yarn and tie them to the 3 punched holes at the bottom of the dream catcher.



9. Choose some beads to thread onto each of the 3 yarn pieces and then tie one religious symbol to the end each of the hanging yarn pieces. (Sample in pictures shows feathers)



10. Decorate the edge of the paper plate with markers.

11. Cut a piece of yarn the length you need to hang it on the wall. Punch one more hole at the top of your paper plate dream catcher and tie the yarn to it.



12. Hang your new Mission Dream Catchers in the classroom or hallway for all to see!

Thanks to Dream-catchers.org!