



Saint of the Month: Heaven's Heroes



Saint Lucia
December 13

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:
 - loves and respects everyone in God's family
 - teaches others about Jesus
 - lives like Jesus
3. To introduce one of our Church's saints, Saint Lucia, telling as much of the story that you feel will interest the children at your grade level.
4. To learn that Lucia was a saint because she lived in a way that respected the Good News of Jesus
5. To learn that some saints lives can have an effect on non-Catholic cultures
6. To help the children develop listening skills

Procedure:

1. Prepare the children to listen to Saint Lucia's story. (Have map posted or globe available)
2. Read, or have read, the attached story of Saint Lucia. Elaborate/abbreviate as necessary for time constraints or age level of listeners.
3. **Pray: *Saint Lucy, you did not hide your light under a basket, but let it shine for the whole world, for all the centuries to see. We may not suffer the hardships in our lives that you did, but are still called to let the light of our Christianity to illumine our daily lives. Please help us to have the courage to bring our faith into our work, our play, our relationships with family and friends, and our conversation -- every corner of our day. Amen***
4. Use the follow-up questions (below)
5. Present follow-up activity below (optional). Any follow-up activity can be substituted.

Saint Lucia

Sometimes referred to as Saint Lucy, Lucia lived in the 4th century at a time when Christians were persecuted for their faith. Her name means "light". When we think of light, we usually think of things being bright and clear; because she lived so long ago, Lucia's story is anything but clear!

We do know for certain that Lucia was a brave woman who lived in the town of Syracuse on the island of Sicily, Italy. The oldest account of her life comes from the 5th century, almost 100 years after her death. By the 6th century, her story was so well known that her name appears in the Sacramentary of Pope Gregory I.

There are many versions of Saint Lucia's story, but most people agree on these points: Lucia was a pious, Christian woman who had dedicated her life to serving God. At some point, her family wanted her to marry a non-believer, a pagan. Lucia refused. She felt that God was calling her to be His alone. Though Lucia was eventually able to convince her family to respect her wishes, the man to whom she was betrothed was not as understanding and reported her to the local anti-Christian governor.

When his guards came to arrest her, legend has it that Lucia could not be moved – even when the guards attached oxen to her to use their strength to pull her along! Finally, she was tortured and killed for refusing to be moved. She gave her life for her Christian beliefs.

Another legend associated with Lucia is that as part of her torture, her eyes were put out by the guards. For this reason, Lucia is the patron saint of the blind and those with eye trouble.

Whatever the stories surrounding Lucia, we can be certain of a few things: Lucia was a woman whose eyes were fixed on heaven. She could have chosen the easier way of marrying the man her family chose, but she was able to see past the present and keep her gaze on eternal life. Her courage to stand up and be counted as a Christian in the face of great danger is one that can inspire us to live as she did – trusting in God's call for us, knowing that our path is always bright with God's light showing us His way.

Saint Lucia's feast day is December 13. She is celebrated as a saint in Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and Orthodox Christian Churches. Her feast day is one of the few saint's days celebrated in Scandinavian countries. A young girl is chosen to be Lucia and wears a white robe with a red sash. She wears a wreath on her head, usually with lit candles. She is followed in procession by her maids, all dressed in white and bearing a single candle.

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

1. What are some ways that you can be courageous every day in school?
2. A saint is someone who tries to live a holy life. How did Saint Lucia show that she wanted to be a saint?
3. What did you especially like about the stories of Lucia?

Follow-up Activities:

Younger students:

1. Make St. Lucia wreaths by tying pine boughs into a circle with twine. Roll up 4 pieces of paper to be the candles; attach small yellow flames of construction paper to the top of each "candle" with a staple. Glue the "candles" in place on the wreath. Talk about how the students can be the light of Jesus to the world as Lucia was. Students can take their wreaths home to share her story.
2. On December 13, have a Saint Lucia procession through the school, stopping in each classroom to tell Lucia's story to others.
3. Saint Lucia devoted her life to God. Pick one small devotional practice that you can offer to God every day (saying a daily rosary, bowing your head at the name of Jesus, blessing oneself when passing a Catholic church) For every small devotion you practice this Advent, place a donation in your Mite Box or classroom Mission Bank.

Older students:

1. There are many variations of the story of Saint Lucia's life. Research them online. What are the common threads? Have a group discussion in your class about what it takes to be a courageous Catholic.
2. Lucia's feast is celebrated in different ways in many Scandinavian countries. Break into small groups with each group choosing a different country's representation of St. Lucia Day to explain and reenact. Take pictures and make a Saint Lucia bulletin board for your school or parish. Share the pictures with Missionary Childhood (mheil@propfaithboston.org, [facebook.com/pontificalmissionsocieties.boston/](https://www.facebook.com/pontificalmissionsocieties.boston/) or [@bostonmissions](https://www.facebook.com/bostonmissions)) so that other schools and parishes can see you carry the light of your faith this month!