

Finding Our Patron

"Since the Church in Christ is a mystery, she ought to be considered the sign and instrument of holiness... Men and women saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult circumstances in the Church's history."

Pope JOHN PAUL II, Servant of God, *Christifideles Laici*, 16.



Some Historical Connections to Saints

- Ste. Anne (Feast - July 26) - Mass was celebrated on the shores of the Detroit River, shortly after Cadillac's arrival. Ste. Anne Church was the first church of the Archdiocese.
- On June 3, Father Gabriel Richard arrived in Detroit, which later would become the feast of Saint Charles Lwanga, Saint Joseph Mkasa and Companions (Martyrs of Uganda).
- Saint John of God (Feast - March 8) - The day on which Detroit became a diocese.
- Saint Waltheof (or Saint Walthen) (Feast - Aug. 3) - The day on which the Diocese of Detroit became an archdiocese.
- Saint Thomas of Villanova (Feast - Sept. 22) - The day on which the first day of class took place in Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit.
- Saint Emily de Rodat (Feast - Sept. 19) - The day on which Pope John Paul II, Servant of God, celebrated Mass in the Pontiac Silverdome.

Examples of Patron Saints

- Michigan - Our Lady Gate of Heaven
- U.S.A. - Immaculate Conception of Mary
- Americas - Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Rose of Lima
- North America - St. Issac Jogues, St. John de Brébeuf and Companions (North America Martyrs)
- Considering our origins:
 - Missions - St. Francis Xavier
 - Sailors - St. Brendan, St. Francis of Paola and St. Elmo
 - Workers - St. Joseph
 - Foundry Workers - St. Agatha

Archdiocese of Detroit



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**Holy Men and Women,
Pray for us.**

September 2009-December 2009



Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

It has been the ancient practice of the Church to seek the intercession of a saint or a group of saints canonized together, such as the North American Martyrs, for a particular need or needs. Similarly, saints have been assigned to various entities in the Church, including

dioceses, for intercession and protection. Going back as far as Cardinal Mooney's tenure as Archbishop of Detroit, the question has been raised: Who is the patron of the Archdiocese? Ste. Anne has certainly been considered by many, through many generations, to be the patron of the Archdiocese but she has never been officially designated as such. In seeking designation of a patron by the Holy See, I am required to carry out a broad-based consultation with the faithful of the Archdiocese.

The faithful of the Archdiocese now have the opportunity to submit names of saints as possible patrons. After these submissions have been collected, I will review them with the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, Presbyteral Council, and Council of Vicars. I will then ask the Holy See to designate our choice as patron for the Archdiocese.

Parishes, Catholic schools, our religious houses, Catholic institutes and associations, and individuals, young and old, are all invited to propose a patron saint. I encourage all who will engage in this discernment to prayerfully entrust the matter to the Lord, keeping the history, character, and needs of the entire Archdiocese in mind.

Asking God's blessing upon you, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of All Saints, I am

*Sincerely yours in Christ,
The Most Reverend Allen H. Vigneron
Archbishop of Detroit*

Finding Our Saint for the Archdiocese of Detroit

Archbishop Vigneron has asked the faithful to help select a patron saint for our Archdiocese. The process starts here and will be completed by the Holy See, when our choice is approved by the Congregation for Causes of Saints.

Why a patron saint?

Many saints intercede for our Archdiocese. A patron saint, however, is known as a special intercessor, aware of our needs, placing them before God. Everyone is aware of some well-known patrons: Saint Patrick in New York and Washington D.C., where the Irish influence was so strong in building up the churches; Saint Louis is the obvious choice for the Archdiocese of Saint Louis, as is Saint Francis of Assisi for San Francisco. Because our needs are many, we too should identify our special saint, standing among the elect "...before God's throne" (Rev. 7:15).

Whom should we choose?

It should be a saint who is identified in some clear way with the area, our need, and our work. It might be a saint who has been historically identified with the Church of Detroit, such as Saint Anne, patroness of the oldest parish in Michigan, or Saint Antoine, patron of the original church in the southern part of the archdiocese, or Saint Joseph, protector of another of our oldest churches on Lake Erie. It may be a saint who reflects the ethnic mix of Detroit or one whose work was well known. One thinks of Father Solanus Casey, though he is not yet canonized and not eligible to be named patron. Others might be Saint Benedict the Moor of Italy, or Blessed Miguel Agustin Pro of Mexico, or Saint Maximilian Kolbe of Poland.

How do saints intercede?

We do not worship saints, obviously, nor do we attribute to them any divine powers. But if we ask friends to pray for us while they are on earth, and we believe in the communion of saints — then asking holy men and women to pray for us after their deaths when they are in the presence of God makes perfect sense. We have "friends in high places," why not make use of them!



Suggestion Form

I / We would like to recommend

as a possible patron for the Archdiocese of Detroit, for the following reasons (print or type):

(you can also use separate sheets of paper)

Submitted by:

Name of Individual or Group

Contact Information

Parish (if applicable)

Please send this form to:

Office of the Chancellor
1234 Washington Blvd.
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Phone: 313-237-5847
Fax: 313-237-4643

*It is permissible to copy and distribute this form.

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