

Summer Assembly - Patron Saints of the Continents



LEADER'S NOTES

This presentation lasts around 25 minutes. We recommend you deliver the whole assembly **but please feel free to use the material as time and circumstances allow.**

This assembly has been prepared by **Mission Together**, the Pope's official children's charity for overseas mission. 97% of money donated by children to **Mission Together** goes directly to helping children overseas. While all projects are Church-backed, **Mission Together** follows Christ's example – helping everyone in need, regardless of background or belief.

This assembly uses animations. We recommend that you run through it first before delivering it.

HOLDING SLIDE

Welcome to your **Mission Together** Assembly.

This assembly is inspired by **Pentecost** and focuses on the concept of the gifts bestowed on us by God. It introduces the Patron Saints of the continents and tells their stories.

You may like to display this holding slide and listen to some music as the children enter the assembly.

SLIDE TWO

Today we are going to be thinking about the **continents**. What is a continent? Can the children name any of the continents?

Click once to reveal the coloured continents. Click again to reveal their names.

Glossary

Continent – a large area of land that contains lots of countries

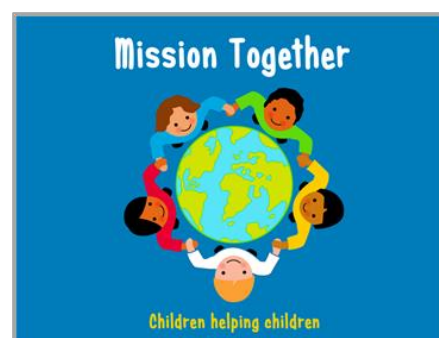
Saint – a very holy person who loved God and who is now in Heaven

Patron saint – a saint who is the special guardian of a place, activity or cause

Monk/Nun – a man/woman who lives in community with other monks/nuns and dedicates their life to loving and serving God

Monastery – a building in which monks live

Missionary – someone sent overseas to share God's love



(Please note, for the purposes of this assembly, the Americas are shown as one continent. This relates to the **Mission Rosary**.)

What comes to mind when we **think** about the continents and the different countries that belong in them?

Click once to reveal some examples.

Perhaps we think of different animals associated with the continents, like kangaroos in Oceania, or certain foods or landmarks we might find there.

Today we are going to be thinking of something a little different.

Click once to reveal the images of the saints.

Today we are going to learn about the **patron saints** of the continents. You may already know about some saints. Perhaps your school or parish is named after one? You might even be named after one! You may also have heard about patron saints before. A **patron saint** is the special guardian of a place or activity. Do you know of any patron saints? (St Patrick – Ireland, etc).

SLIDE THREE

The first continent we are going to think about is **Africa**.

Click once to reveal the continent's patron saint. Their story will then automatically be told through a series of images. Please continue to read the content below while the images appear.

This large, imposing figure is **St Moses the Strong** who is the patron saint of Africa. And if you think he looks fierce, that's because he was!



Moses lived in **Egypt** in around 350 AD. He was kept as a slave and life was hard. Moses saw how unfair life was for him and his fellow slaves. This made him **angry** and he often lost his temper and fought with others. He found himself in trouble and without friends.

One day Moses ran away and hid with some **monks** and this changed his life forever. He saw how the monks lived in **peace** and gave their lives to love and serve **God**, and soon Moses was baptised and became a monk himself.

Moses was still very **strong and brave**, but now he used his strength and courage for good. He once caught some robbers single-handedly! He asked the other monks what to do with them, because he didn't think it would be right to hurt them. Amazingly, these robbers were so inspired that they themselves became monks too! And when the monastery was attacked by bandits, Moses urged the monks to run rather than fight.

Questions: Why do you think Moses was so inspired by the monks? What job do you think God was sending Moses out to do? What gifts did God give Moses to do this job?

SLIDE FOUR

Next we are going to learn about the patron saint of **the Americas**.

Click once to reveal the continent's patron saint. Their story will then automatically be told through a series of images. Please continue to read out the content below while the images appear.



This is Isabel Flores de Olivia, who was so beautiful she was often compared to a rose and eventually became known as **Rosa**. She was born in Lima, **Peru** in 1586.

Rosa wanted to be a **nun** from a very young age but her parents wanted her to marry instead. After a while her father decided she could dedicate her life to God after all, but not as a nun. Instead, Rosa had a room at her parents' house in which she could live alone and **pray**.

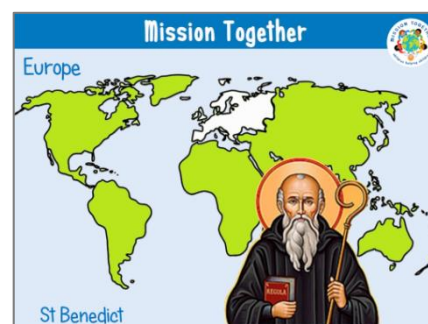
Rosa had a strong desire to **help others**. She grew flowers in the garden and sold them to help her parents. She also made and sold lace and embroidery, and used the money to **feed the poor** and **care for the sick**.

Questions: How did Rosa show her love for God? What mission do you think God gave Rosa? What special gifts did God give Rosa for this mission?

SLIDE FIVE

Now we move to **Europe**.

Click once to reveal the continent's patron saint. Their story will then automatically be told through a series of images. Please continue to read the content below while the images appear.



This is **St Benedict**. Benedict lived in Italy in around 480 AD.

While studying in Rome, Benedict decided that the city wasn't for him and he left to live in Enfide, a place in the mountains. This was quite a change because there he lived in a **cave**! He did this because he wanted to live in peace and get closer to God. In the silence and solitude of the cave, he could hear God's voice.

The cave was above a lake and just below a **monastery**. Benedict lived alone in this cave for **three years**, with a kind monk from the monastery providing him with food.

Benedict was very **wise**, and was soon well-known by those in the monastery.

In fact, he was so respected that the monks asked Benedict to join them as the abbot (the monk in charge of the monastery). However, it turned out that Benedict was too strict for the monks and they tried to **poison him!** When Benedict said a **prayer** over his poisoned drink, the cup broke and Benedict survived.

Benedict went on to write an **important book** about how to follow God and run a monastery. Many monks followed Benedict's example and teaching, and still do to this day.

Questions: Why do you think Benedict lived in a cave? In what ways do you think Benedict might have been too strict for the monks? What was Benedict sent out to do by God? What gifts did God give Benedict in order for him to do his work?

SLIDE SIX

The next continent is **Oceania**.

Click once to reveal the continent's patron saint. Their story will then automatically be told through a series of images. Please continue to read out the content below while the images appear.



The patron saint of Oceania is **St Peter Chanel**.

Chanel was born in 1803 in **France**. Ever since he was around 14, Peter dreamt of being a **missionary** overseas: sailing off to faraway places and teaching people about God.

Peter became a **priest** and asked his Bishop if he could go overseas, but Peter was needed in France instead. Time and again he asked to be a missionary. Finally at age 33, his dream came true.

He set sail with seven men and travelled across the world before arriving a year later on **Futuna**, an island off the east coast of Australia. The **king** of Futuna first welcomed them but soon became worried that his people would obey God instead of the king, so he sent a **warrior** to kill Peter.

The king later felt sorry for what he had done and the people of Futuna created a special song and dance to remember Peter Chanel. This dance is still performed today!

Questions: Why do you think Peter wanted to be a missionary? How do you think Peter felt as he set off on his journey? Why do you think God sent Peter to the other side of the world? What gifts might Peter have been given by God to take on such a task?

SLIDE SEVEN

The final continent is **Asia**.

Click once to reveal the continent's patron saint.



Their story will then automatically be told through a series of images. Please continue to read the content below while the images appear.

The patron saint of Asia is **St Francis Xavier** and he was born in 1506 in what is now known as Spain. He was born to a wealthy family and went to study in Paris, determined to continue his comfortable life. While there, he made friends with **Ignatius** of Loyola.

Ignatius also later became a famous saint. He felt called to **God** and wanted to share this with others. But Francis took a lot of convincing. Ignatius helped Francis to see how important God was. Eventually Francis became a priest and was sent to Asia to share God's love with people there.

Francis went to India where there were Christian communities without churches or priests to guide them. Francis visited the **sick**, taught **children** about God, and helped to build nearly 40 **churches**. He went on to visit Indonesia and Japan and is known as one of the greatest **missionaries**.

Questions: Why do you think Francis wasn't keen at first about following God? How would you feel about changing your life to serve God? What did God send Francis to do? What gifts do you think Francis was given by God in order to do such amazing work?

SLIDE EIGHT

Read or invite a child to read the text from Acts 2:1-11.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11

*When the day of **Pentecost** came, the Apostles were all together in one place.*

*Suddenly a noise came from heaven. It sounded like a **strong wind blowing**. This noise filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw something that looked like **flames of fire**. The flames hovered over each of them.*

*The Apostles were all **filled with the Holy Spirit**, and began to speak different languages. The Holy Spirit was giving them the power to speak these languages.*

*There were some Jews staying in Jerusalem who were from every country in the world. When they heard this noise, a **crowd** came together.*

*They were all surprised, because each one heard the Apostles speaking in his **own language**.*

*They said, "Look! Aren't all these men that we hear speaking from Galilee? But each of us **hears them in his own language**. How is this possible? We are from different places but we hear these men telling in our own languages about the **great things God has done!**"*

The Word of the Lord

At Pentecost, the **Holy Spirit** came to the Apostles and they were given the **gift** of speaking different languages, so that they could share with everyone the Good News of Jesus rising again.



The **patron saints** we heard about today were also given gifts to help them to share the Good News. Can you remember what **gifts** they were given by God?

Moses was given strength and courage. **Rosa** was given kindness and talents such as embroidery. **Benedict** was given patience and wisdom. **Peter** was given a sense of adventure and a passion for sharing God's love with others. **Francis** got along well with others and had the gift of being a great speaker.

These patron saints were all **called by God and sent out to do his work**. God wants us all to do what we can, wherever we are in the world. How can we follow their example and share God's love with others? What **gifts** have we been given to help us? **What is God sending us out to do?**

SLIDE NINE

Let's finish this assembly by saying the **Mission Together prayer** together.

As we say this prayer, let's think about what God is sending us out to do. What are your gifts? **What is your mission?**

Mission Together

Mission Together Prayer:

May all children
In the world
Share love
Share friendship and live
In the peace
Of God's love
Now and forever.
Amen



