

“Saint Hungry”

An eating adventure led by Saints
For The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta
By Katie McRee

Key verses/text:

Stories of Saints who are somehow connected to a food.

Objectives: To engage our sense of taste as a way to learn about people who have loved God and worked to further the Gospel. Challenging the youth to use food to tell friends/family about the gospel

Please note that the format of this lesson is different from our standard run down, but all the elements will be covered. Hook and Took are combined and will take up the bulk of your time. The set up is high, but worth it! The kids will certainly engage and remember what you teach during this time! This lesson is a better fit for your more casual gatherings, and not so great for a Sunday morning

The Set up: High... but totally worth it!

The Plan:

- Hook and Book Combination: **St. Hungry** (45-60 mins): In this section, you will tell stories of a variety of different saints that are connected to food, and then eat the food that they are connected to.
- Look: **Name that Saint!** (5 mins): a quiz designed to help them remember the saints they just learned about
- Took: **Family Meal Challenge** (less than 5 mins): challenging the kids to prepare a meal for their family that has one of the foods and tell the story of the saint during the meal.

The Supplies:

- Copy of lesson
- Plates, napkins, cups
- Bottle water- one per kid, for palate cleansing purposes!
- Food supplies (these will vary depending on what saints you choose. Look at the options at the back of the lesson and create your supply list after deciding on the saints you will focus on)
- Copies of quiz, one per student
- Pens/pencils
- A prize (optional)

(Open in prayer, announcements, and any other start of gathering traditions)

Saint Hungry (Hook and Book, 45-60 mins)

In this section, you are telling stories of different Saints that have been adopted as the patron saint of a particular food (Book) and having the youth eat the food that corresponds to that Saint (Hook). If your kids are like mine, connecting the lesson to their tummies is always a win!

Below is the list of saints and their food, and at the back of the lesson are their stories. You can present them in any order that you would like. Use as many or as few of the saints as you would like, being sure to create your shopping list and recruit parents to bring dishes depending on the saints you choose.

The Saints:

1. St. Isidore the Farmer- salad or vegetable dish
2. St. Anthony the Abbot- Bacon
3. St. Neot- fish (fish sticks, or something fancier if you can!)
4. St. Brigid- Dairy farmers (anything made with dairy)
5. St. Ambrose- honey. This could easily be edited out, but it could be fun to do tastings of different honeys.
6. St. Elizabeth of Hungary - Baked goods
7. St. David of Wales- vegetarians (another vegetable dish or tofu)
8. St. Lawrence- Roasts... because he was roasted alive!!!! (my idea- cook hotdogs over the fire pit)
9. St. Honore- pastry chefs (here is a cream puff recipe out there if you are willing to Google... or you can just serve cream puffs!
10. Saint Drogo- Coffee/ Marco d'Aviano –cappuccino
11. St. Augustine of Hippo- Brewers (use root beer)
12. St. Urban- Wine (use Cheerwine or grape juice)

Set up:

- Before the kids arrive, select the saints you want to focus on and collect all your supplies
- Print up the copies of the scripts so you will be able to quickly reference the story. Get to know the stories a little bit beforehand so that you can really get into the story telling- some of the stories are a little crazy, so play up the drama!

- When ever possible, have the food already served up/portioned out before the kids arrive.
- It worked well for us to give the kids a large plate and serve each course onto that same plate and let them eat as much or as little as they would like.
- There are so many moving parts in this lesson, you will want to have everything lined up before hand, otherwise you will end up spending half your time just trying to get the kids to settle down and then you will run out of time.

Options:

- If you don't have enough adult help, ask a few youth to help serve each food at the appropriate time... there are too many moving parts to have you telling the stories and serving at the same time.
- Choose different youth to present the stories of the saints
- Read each story and then get the kids to guess what food they represent before you bring them the food.

Name That Saint! (Look, 5 mins)

See how much the youth remember by giving them a quiz!

- Print up copies of the quiz at the end of the lesson
- Explain that you will hand out the quizzes FACE DOWN, and they will be racing to finish the quiz and race it up to you. They should not flip over the page until you tell them to start. The person who wins will get a prize.
- Hand out pens/pencils
- Hand out the quiz FACE DOWN.
- Once everyone has their quiz, let them flip it over and race to finish. Be ready to quickly check for correct answers (you may want to have an answer key handy!)
- Award the prize to the fastest kid- something like antacids, a box of plastic cutlery, or a fast food gift card.

Family Meal Challenge (Took, 5 mins)

The students will think of a way to share a saint story with their friends or family in the coming week

- Have the kids form small groups of 2-4 people each.
- In their groups, have them go around and tell which saint story was their favorite and why.
- When everyone is done sharing in their groups, challenge them all to find a time **IN THE NEXT 7 DAYS** when they can gather with their family and/or friends and serve the food and tell about the Saint that they most connected with.

Close in prayer, thanking God that we are connected to such amazing people and for our full bellies, and asking him to be with those who are hungry.

1. St Isidor the Farmer, Patron Saint of Farmers

Salad or Vegetable dish

Isidore has become the patron of farmers and rural communities. In particular he is the patron of Madrid, Spain, and of the United States National Rural Life Conference. When he was barely old enough to wield a hoe, Isidore entered the service of John de Vergas, a wealthy landowner from Madrid, and worked faithfully on his estate outside the city for the rest of his life. It is said that he was able to complete his plowing with the help of 3 angels. He married a young woman as simple and upright as himself who also became a saint—Maria de la Cabeza. They had one son, who died as a child.

Isidore had deep religious instincts. He rose early in the morning to go to church and spent many a holiday devoutly visiting the churches of Madrid and surrounding areas. All day long, as he walked behind the plow, he communed with God. His devotion, one might say, became a problem, for his fellow workers sometimes complained that he often showed up late because of lingering in church too long.

He was known for his love of the poor, and there are accounts of Isidore's supplying them miraculously with food. He had a great concern for the proper treatment of animals.

He died May 15, 1130, and was declared a saint in 1622 with Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, Teresa of Avila and Philip Neri. Together, the group is known in Spain as "the five saints."

2. St Anthony the Abbot, Patron Saint of Bacon

Bacon, or a dish featuring bacon

St. Anthony the Abbot, one of the greats among the Desert Fathers, whose life by Athanasius has remained a classic for almost 1700 years.

St. Anthony is most commonly portrayed with a boar or pig, symbolizing his victory over gluttony but, in the way these things often go, he came to be regarded as the patron of pigs and swineherds. The measles, known as St. Anthony's Fire, were often treated by rubbing the eruptions with pork fat or bacon.

3. St. Neot, Patron Saint of Fish

Fish sticks, tuna salad, or any fish dish

St. Neot, a Glastonbury, England monk who died in 877, is the patron saint of fish. He had a way with birds and animals, performing miracles with them. He was also reportedly only 15 inches tall and spent his days in a well, water up to his neck, practicing his devotions. This connection to water is what makes him the patron saint of fish.

4. St, Brigid, Patron Saint of Dairy Farmers

Anything made with dairy

Daughter of Dubtach, pagan Scottish king of Leinster, and Brocca, a Christian Pictish slave who had been baptized by Saint Patrick. Just before Brigid's birth, her mother was sold to a Druid landowner. Brigid remained with her mother till she was old enough to serve her legal owner Dubtach, her father.

She grew up marked by her high spirits and tender heart, and as a child, she heard Saint Patrick preach, which she never forgot. She could not bear to see anyone hungry or cold, and to help them, often gave away things that were Dubtach's. When Dubtach protested, she replied that "*Christ dwelt in every creature*". Dubtach tried to sell her to the King of Leinster, and while they bargained, she gave a treasured sword of her father's to a leper. Dubtach was about to strike her when Brigid explained she had given the sword to God through the leper, because of its great value. The King, a Christian, forbade Dubtach to strike her, saying "Her merit before God is greater than ours". Dubtach solved this domestic problem by giving Brigid her freedom.

Brigid's aged mother was in charge of her master's dairy. Brigid took charge and often gave away the produce. But the dairy prospered under her (hence her patronage of milk maids, dairy workers, cattle, etc.), and the Druid freed Brigid's mother.

Brigid returned to her father, who arranged a marriage for her with a young bard. Brigid refused, and to keep her virginity, went to her Bishop, Saint Mel of Ardagh, and took her first vows. Legend says that she prayed that her beauty be taken from her so no one would seek her hand in marriage; her prayer was granted, and she regained her beauty only after making her vows. Another tale says that when Saint Patrick heard her final vows, he mistakenly used the form for ordaining priests. When told of it he replied, "*So be it, my son, she is destined for great things.*"

Her first convent started c.468 with seven nuns. At the invitation of bishops, she started convents all over Ireland. She was a great traveller, especially considering the conditions of the time, which led to her patronage of travellers, sailors, etc.

Brigid invented the double monastery, the monastery of Kildara, which means *Church of the Oak*, that she ran on the Liffey river being for both monks and nuns. Saint Conleth became its first bishop; this connection and the installation of a bell that lasted over 1000 years apparently led to her patronage of blacksmiths and those in related fields.

5. St. Ambrose, Patron Saint of Honey

Honey served on crackers. You can find specialty honeys if you look around a bit!

St. Ambrose is also known as the "Honey-Tongued Doctor," a pun on the saint's name (the word for honey in Latin is ambrosia); his preaching was said to be mellifluous, as sweet as flowing honey. Also according to legend, when Ambrose was a baby, a swarm of bees settled on his mouth, an omen that he would be a great orator. St. Ambrose is the patron of bee keepers, bees, candle makers, domestic animals, learning, Milan Italy, and students. He is often depicted with a beehive or bees in his iconography, symbols which also indicate wisdom.

6. St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Patron Saint of Baked Goods

Bread or any other baked good

In her short life Elizabeth manifested such great love for the poor and suffering that she has become the patroness of Catholic charities and of the Secular Franciscan Order. The daughter of the King of Hungary, Elizabeth chose a life of penance and asceticism when a life of leisure and luxury could easily have been hers. This choice endeared her in the hearts of the common people throughout Europe.

At the age of 14 Elizabeth was married to Louis of Thuringia (a German principality), whom she deeply loved; she bore three children. Under the spiritual direction of a Franciscan friar, she led a life of prayer, sacrifice and service to the poor and sick. Seeking to become one with the poor, she wore simple clothing. Daily she would take bread to hundreds of the poorest in the land, who came to her gate.

After six years of marriage, her husband died in the Crusades, and Elizabeth was grief-stricken. Her husband's family looked upon her as squandering the royal purse, and mistreated her, finally throwing her out of the palace. The return of her husband's allies from the Crusades resulted in her being reinstated, since her son was legal heir to the throne.

In 1228, Elizabeth joined the Secular Franciscan Order, spending the remaining few years of her life caring for the poor in a hospital, which she founded in honor of St. Francis. Elizabeth's health declined, and she died before her 24th birthday in 1231. Her great popularity resulted in her canonization four years later.

7. St. David of Wales, Patron Saint of Vegetarians

Vegetable dish or tofu

March 1 is St. David's Day, a celebration of the patron saint of Wales—and of vegetarians, because of the strict diet he preached to his followers. This Welsh native often is depicted with a dove on his shoulder, traditionally regarded as a sign of God's grace on his life. Although he lived in the 6th century, when life was notoriously short, David lived to be a remarkably old man—some versions of his life claiming that he became a centenarian. Perhaps his longevity was due to his diet, very hard work in the fields and quiet prayer.

8. St Lawrence of Rome, Patron Saint of Roast

If you have a fire pit, have them roast hotdogs, or you can have any kind of roasted meat.

Saint Lawrence was one of seven deacons who were in charge of giving help to the poor and the needy. When a persecution broke out, Pope St. Sixtus was condemned to death. As he was led to execution, Lawrence followed him weeping, "Father, where are you going without your deacon?" he said. "I am not leaving you, my son," answered the Pope. "in three days you will follow me." Full of joy, Lawrence gave to the poor the rest of the money he had on hand and even sold expensive vessels to have more to give away.

The Prefect of Rome, a greedy pagan, thought that the Church had a great fortune hidden away. So he ordered Lawrence to bring the Church's treasure to him. The Saint said he would, in three days. Then he went through the city and gathered together all the poor and sick people supported by the Church. When he showed them to the Prefect, he said: "This is the Church's treasure!"

In great anger, the Prefect condemned Lawrence to a slow, cruel death. The Saint was tied on top of an iron grill over a slow fire that roasted his flesh little by little, but Lawrence was burning with so much love of God that he almost did not feel the flames. In fact, God gave him so much strength and joy that he even joked. "Turn me over," he said to the judge. "I'm done on this side!" And just before he died, he said, "It's cooked enough now." Then he prayed that the city of Rome might be converted to Jesus and that the Christian faith might spread all over the world.

On a side note, due to his humor, Saint Lawrence is also the Patron Saint of Comedians, hence a comedic "roast."

9. St. Honore, Patron Saint of Pastries

Any pastry, cream puff, or the Honore Pastry, which you can find a recipe for online

Honoré, also known as Honoratus, became bishop of Amiens in Northern France in the sixth century. Sources disagree over whether he was a baker, but when he was named bishop, a baker's peel — the flat wooden paddle used to move loaves to and from a hot oven — was said to have put down roots and transformed into a fruiting tree, much to the surprise of the incredulous woman holding it.

After his death, processions in his honor reputedly stopped both droughts and deluges, ensuring good wheat harvests and, consequently, winning him the hearts of bakers.

Pictures of St. Honoré from church iconography reinforce his *boulangier* roots. He's holding his wooden peel, often with a few delicious-looking loaves of crusty French bread nearby.

According to historian Steven Laurence Kaplan of Cornell University, who wrote *The Bakers of Paris and the Bread Question, 1700-1775*, for many years St. Honoré had a rival in the battle for bakers' patron.

Initially, bakers organized around both Honoré and St. Lazare, the latter of whom had a reputation for defending against leprosy. Bakers of the time, with their physically demanding profession and rudimentary understanding of disease, were especially afraid of leprosy, Kaplan tells *The Salt*.

Eventually the French bakers' guild settled in favor of Honoré in the 17th century, subsidizing a chapel that became the central point for the gatherings of their confraternity, a sort of religious arm of the guild.

Fast-forward to the 19th century, and Parisian bakers began bringing glory to the saint's name in the best way they knew how — with a fabulous confection. (Given the historical division between bread bakers and pastry chefs, the latter probably had little connection to Honoré, making this more a worshipping of butter and sugar than of a patron saint.)

10. St. Drogo, Patron Saint of Coffee AND Marco d'Aviano, Patron Saint of Cappuccino

(I would just choose one of these, unless you have a particularly coffee loving group)

Drogo was born the son of a Flemish nobleman in 1105 in Flanders, was the original multi-tasker—he could reportedly “bilocate” and was seen simultaneously working in the fields and going to Mass on Sundays. This undoubtedly took a lot of energy, which is probably one of the reasons why he is the patron saint of coffee and coffeehouses (as well as ugly people and cattle).

Marco d'Aviano, a wandering preacher for the Capuchin monastic order, is credited with rallying Catholics and Protestants on the eve of the Battle of Vienna in 1683, which was crucial to halting the advance of Turkish soldiers into Europe. He is also remembered by some as the man who, by legend, inspired the fashionable cappuccino coffee now drunk by millions across the globe...

Coffee was once seen by the Vatican as an "infidel" drink.

The monk, who was born in the city of his name in northern Italy in 1631, was sent by the pope of the day to unite Christians in the face of a huge Ottoman army.

Legend has it that, following the victory, the Viennese reportedly found sacks of coffee abandoned by the enemy and, finding it too strong for their taste, diluted it with cream and honey.

The drink being of a brown color like that of the Capuchins' robes, the Viennese named it cappuccino in honor of Marco D'Aviano's order.

11. St. Augustine of Hippo, Patron Saint of Brewers

Root beer

St. Augustine of Hippo is the patron of brewers because of his conversion from a former life of loose living, which included parties, entertainment, and worldly ambitions. His complete turnaround and conversion has been an inspiration to many who struggle with a particular vice or habit they long to break.

This famous son of St. Monica was born in Africa and spent many years of his life in wicked living and in false beliefs. Though he was one of the most intelligent men who ever lived and though he had been brought up a Christian, his sins of impurity and his pride darkened his mind so much, that he could not see or understand the Divine Truth anymore. Through the prayers of his holy mother and the marvelous preaching of St. Ambrose, Augustine finally became convinced that Christianity was the one true religion. Yet he did not become a Christian then, because he thought he could never live a pure life. One day, however, he heard about two men who had suddenly been converted on reading the life of St. Antony, and he felt terrible ashamed of himself. "What are we doing?" he cried to his friend Alipius. "Unlearned people are taking Heaven by force, while we, with all our knowledge, are so cowardly that we keep rolling around in the mud of our sins!"

Full of bitter sorrow, Augustine flung himself out into the garden and cried out to God, "How long more, O Lord? Why does not this hour put an end to my sins?" Just then he heard a child singing, "Take up and read!" Thinking that God intended him to hear those words, he picked up the book of the Letters of St. Paul, and read the first passage his gaze fell on. It was just what Augustine needed, for in it, St. Paul says to put away all impurity and to live in imitation of Jesus. That did it! From then on, Augustine began a new life.

He was baptized, became a priest, a bishop, a famous Catholic writer, Founder of religious orders, and one of the greatest saints that ever lived. He became very devout and charitable, too. On the wall of his room he had the following sentence written in large letters: "Here we do not speak evil of anyone." St. Augustine overcame strong heresies, practiced great poverty and supported the poor, preached very often and prayed with great fervor right up until his death. "Too late have I loved You!" he once cried to God, but with his holy life he certainly made up for the sins he committed before his conversion. His feast day is August 28th.

12. St. Urban of Langres, Patron Saint of Wine

Cheerwine or grape juice

St. Urban (327 – ca. 390) was a French saint and bishop. He served as the sixth bishop of Langres from 374 until his death. Saint Lodegaria was his sister.

Urban was the bishop of Langres, France, beginning in 374. Legend states that soon after taking his position, political turmoil erupted, and he was driven from his house. St. Urban hid from his persecutors in a vineyard. The vine-dressers in the area concealed him, and he took the opportunity to convert them to Christianity. Those same vine-dressers then helped him in his covert ministry, as he moved from one town to another via their vineyards. Due to this work, and to Urban's devotion to the Holy Blood, he developed great affection to all the people in the wine industry, and they for him. Urban is thus the patron saint of all those who work in the wine industry and is invoked against blight and alcoholism.

Name that Saint!

As quickly as you can write the letter that corresponds with the correct Saint next to each food. When you are done, run it up to your leader to check for correctness. GO!

1. The Patron Saint of Bacon
 2. The Patron Saint of Vegetarians
 3. The Patron Saint of Wine
 4. The Patron Saint of Roasts
 5. The Patron Saint of Pastries
 6. The Patron Saint of Baked Goods
 7. The Patron Saint of Coffee
 8. The Patron Saint of Beer
 9. The Patron Saint of Dairy
 10. The Patron Saint of Farmers
 11. The Patron Saint of Fish
 12. The Patron Saint of Honey
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- A. St. Drogo
 - B. St. Augustine of Hippo
 - C. St. Ambrose
 - D. St. Lawrence
 - E. St. Honore
 - F. St. Isidore
 - G. St. Neot
 - H. St. Urban
 - I. St. Elizabeth of Hungary
 - J. St. Brigid
 - K. St. David of Wales
 - L. St. Anthony the Abbot