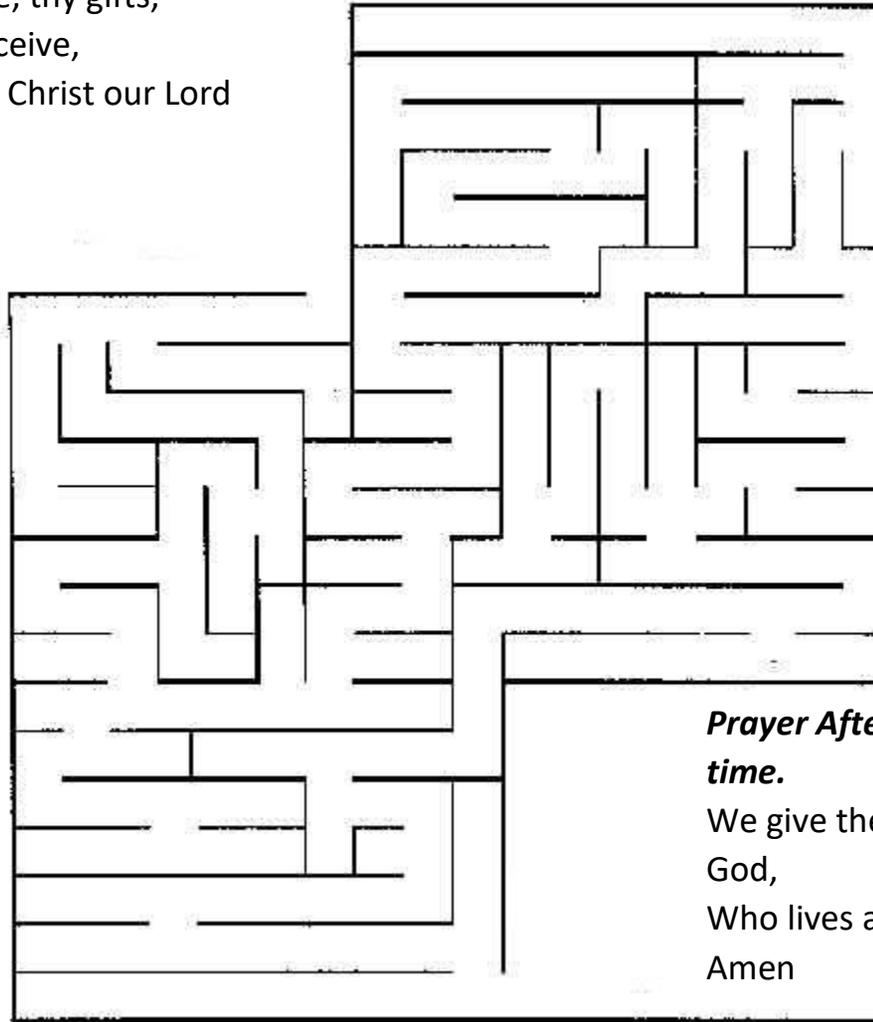


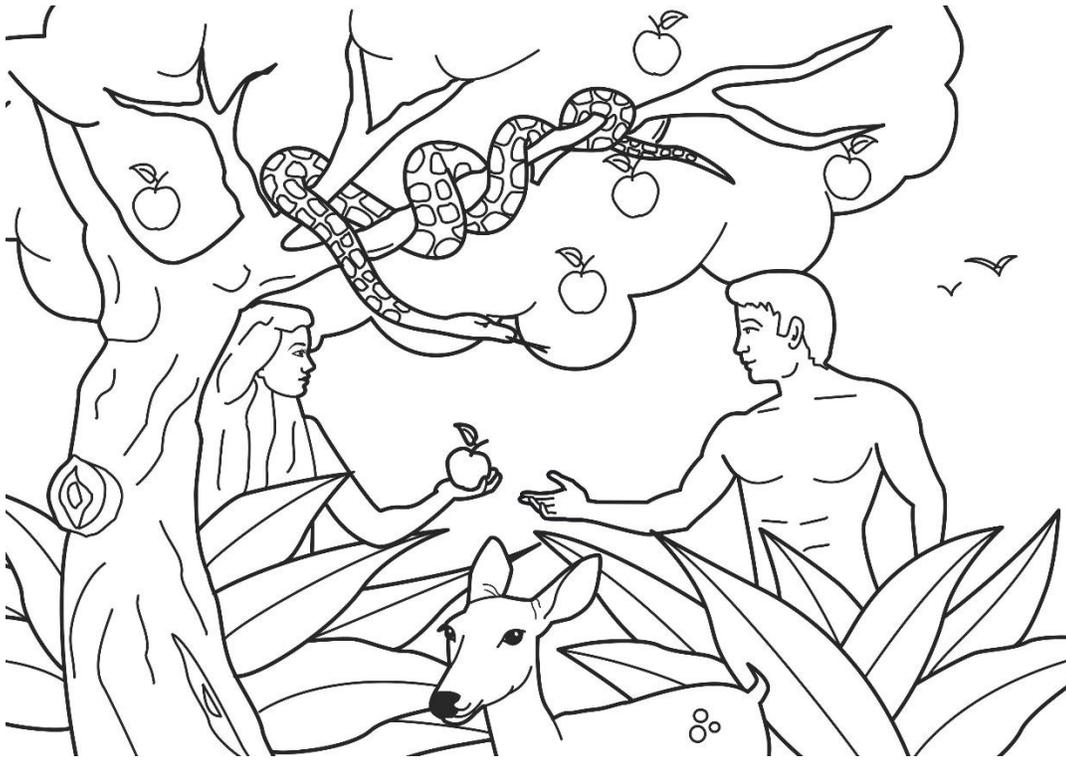
Prayer Before Meals: Say this before you eat, every time.

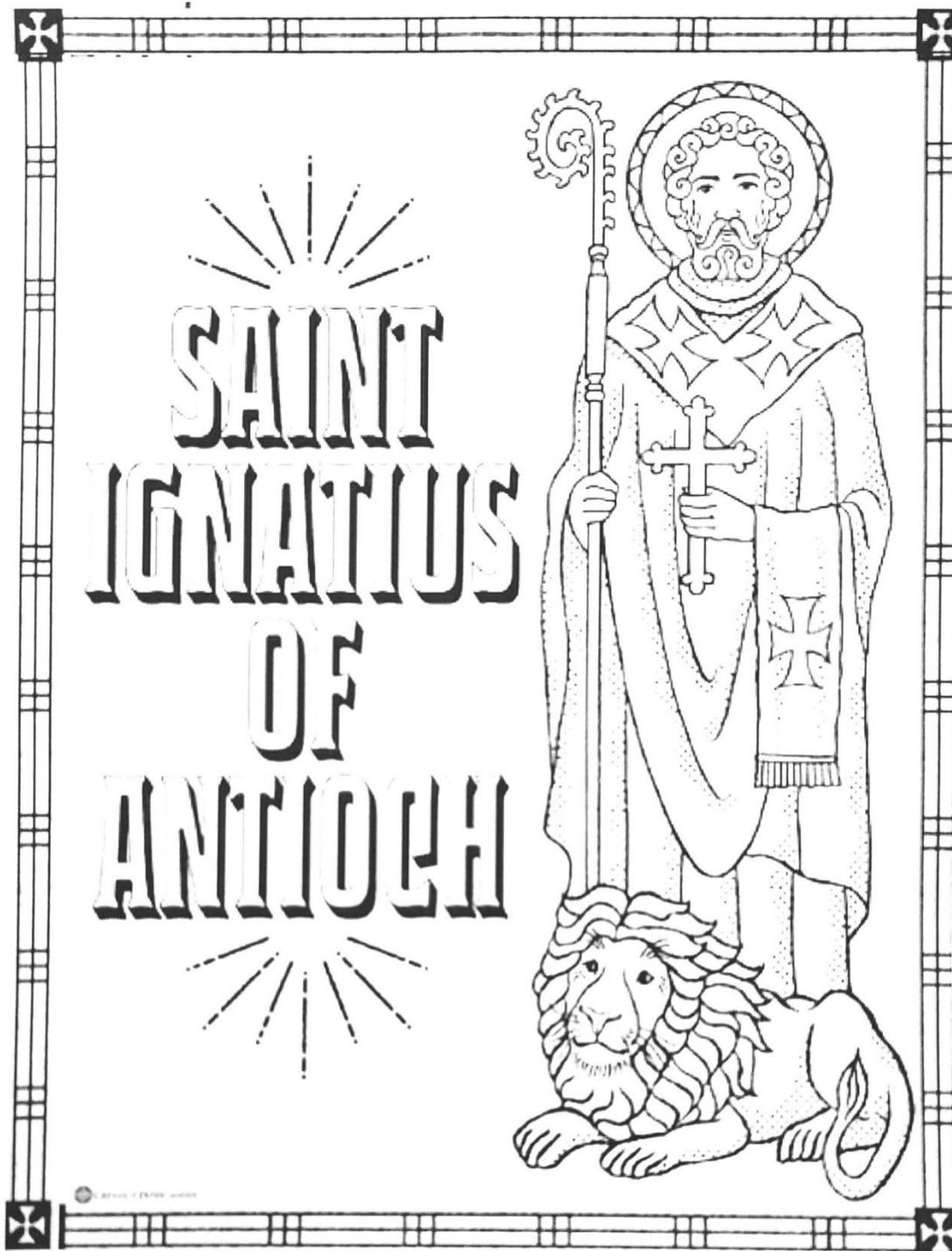
Bless us, O Lord, and these, thy gifts,
Which we are about to receive,
From thy bounty, through Christ our Lord
Amen



Prayer After Meals: Say this after you eat, every time.

We give thee thanks, for all thy benefits, Almighty
God,
Who lives and reigns forever.
Amen





Almighty ever-living God,
you gave St. Ignatius Martyr, Bishop of Antioch,
the courage to witness to the Gospel of Christ
even to the point of giving his life for it.

By his prayers, help us to endure all suffering
for love of you
and to seek you with all our hearts,
for you alone are the source of life.

Through the intercession of St. Ignatius,
we pray for our parish community:
help us be bridge builders in a divided world,
bringing the hope and love of Jesus Christ
into our families, workplaces, and communities.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

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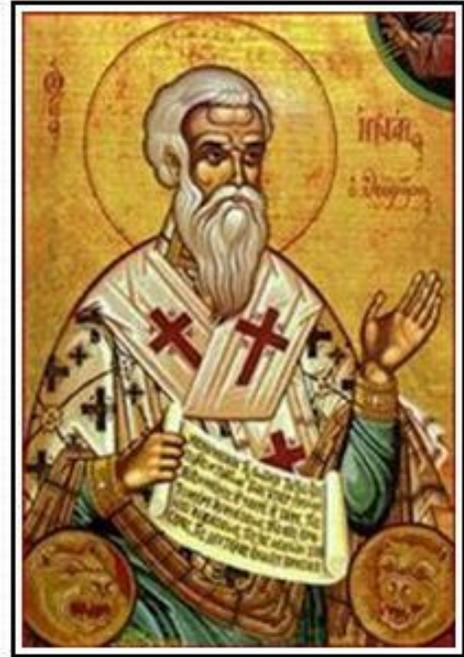
IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

Feast Day: October 17

Canonized: Pre-Congregation

Do you ever wonder who was the first person to call the community Jesus established the “Catholic Church”? It was Saint Ignatius of Antioch. It was his way of explaining that the Church was open to anyone who wanted to be a follower of Jesus.

Because Ignatius lived so long ago, we know very little about his early life. Tradition tells us that he was born around the year 50 and died sometime around the year 108. He was a disciple of Saint John the Evangelist, who was the Bishop of Antioch, in Syria. Ignatius succeeded him as bishop. Ignatius was like a shepherd, gently leading his people to understand the teachings of the Apostles and to put those beliefs into practice correctly.



In the year 107, the cruel Emperor Trajan demanded that Bishop Ignatius publicly speak out against our faith. Ignatius refused to deny his belief in Jesus Christ. Trajan sentenced him to die by being killed by lions in the Colosseum in Rome, far from Antioch. He wanted to make an example of this holy man.

Ten soldiers were assigned to guard him on the long trip. Bishop Ignatius used the time to write seven letters. The letters reminded the members of the Church to be faithful to the Lord and to follow the teachings of their bishop. They encourage the Christian community to serve the poor and needy—their brothers and sisters. Ignatius' letters have been preserved down through the ages. They still guide our Church today.

As Ignatius and his guards journeyed to Rome, they were met at different places by the local bishop and many members of the Christian community who came to honor him. It is said that he blessed everyone and told them he would pray for them.

Ignatius was not afraid to die. He said that his death would be his birth—into the new life made possible by Jesus' Resurrection: "I am writing to all the churches to let it be known that I will gladly die for God if only you do not stand in my way. I plead with you: show me no untimely kindness. Let me be food for the wild beasts, for they are my way to God."

The Church honors Ignatius of Antioch as a saint. We can pray to Saint Ignatius and ask him to help us grow in the faith that has been handed down to us from the Apostles.