

How to Play Lent Madness

The format is simple: 32 saints are placed into a tournament-like single elimination bracket, much like the NCAA Basketball tournament. This is a creation of the folks at Forward Movement, the same lovely disciples who make the Day by Day devotional. The intention is to help you learn more about a wide array of Christian witnesses across time, and have some fun doing it.

Each pairing remains open for a set period of time (usually one day) and people vote for their favorite saint with a simple click on the Lent Madness website. The easiest way to remember to vote if you use social media is to follow Lent Madness on facebook or twitter (or maybe instagram). This is very much an internet communicated experience. Do you know someone who might enjoy it but is not 'online'? Could you call them daily and share the postings and help them vote? (Or the reverse!) What a lovely connective Lenten practice that would be.

16 saints make it to the Round of the Saintly Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the coveted Golden Halo.

The first round consists of basic biographical information about each of the 32 saints. Things get a bit more interesting in the subsequent rounds as we offer quotes and quirks, explore legends, and even move into the area of saintly kitsch.

Three Ways to Expand your Lent Madness Practice

- Look up and pray with a text of the day for these saints.
- Learn more about the time or place that the saints lived in.
- Write your own 'collect prayer' from what you have learned about these saints.

God you are _____, we pray _____, so that _____, in the name of (God/Jesus/Spirit/Trinity). Amen.

Three Questions to 'Chat with' the Saints of the Day

Imagine you are sitting in a cafe with this saint for a long while, or an airport waiting area.

- Is there something that you would want to share with others about this chat with these saints?
- How do these saints connect with a focus of Lent: penitence, truth-telling about our personal sinfulness, recommitment to the Christian practices, letting go of harmful ways of life, or, reconciliation?
- What would change in your life if you reshaped one behavior or attitude to be more like these saints (in a good way)?