

November

PRAYER:

Act of Faith

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Stewardship: Returning to God the first fruits of your time, talent, and treasure

A steward is someone who is given the responsibility to care for and protect things that belong to someone else. Because each of our lives is a gift from God, we are all “stewards” who will give our lives back to God when we go to heaven. So while we are on earth, we must take care of and use wisely all the time, talents, and material things with which God has blessed us, using all for the benefit of others and the glory of God.



Blessed Fra Angelico,
icon by Jody Cole

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Blessed John of Fiesole or Fra Angelico
(1387-1455, Italy)

Feast: February 18

Blessed John of Fiesole joined the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans) as a young man. He was a very talented artist who painted large, beautiful images of Jesus, Mary, and many of the saints. His paintings have become so famous that copies of them can be found all over the world today—perhaps even in your school!

Blessed John believed that to paint a true image of Jesus Christ, the painter had to be Christ-like, and so he began all his paintings with *prayer*. The beauty and the prayerfulness of his paintings earned him the nickname by which he is known today, “Brother Angel”—Fra Angelico.

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DISCUSSION:

Is it possible to draw or sing something holy without actually praying while you do it? Can you see or hear the difference when people *pray* while they draw or sing?

HOME PROJECT: Due November _____**PRAYER:**

Read Genesis 1:27-31. What does it mean that God gives us “dominion” over plants and animals? How can we be good stewards of God’s creation today?

Read the story of the widow’s mite (Luke 21:1-4). What is the difference between giving from surplus and giving from want? If you are poor, is it foolish to give part of your money to God?

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

1. Practice recycling in your classroom.
2. What is one thing you can do as a group to better care for your individual supplies or the school property in your classroom?
3. Tithing: If you earn an allowance, get birthday money, babysit, etc., is that money a gift from God? Do the math: what percent would be an appropriate amount to return to God by giving to the Church and charity? Role-play situations where you earn or receive money and decide to give a portion to God before spending it on yourself. (Remember, don’t choose what you want first and just give God the leftovers!)
4. Role-play using your talents for God. Chose an area of talent such as reading, writing, math, science, humor, politics, art, singing, playing an instrument, athletics, drama, cooking, languages, etc. Act out a situation where you could use that talent for God.

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PRAYER:

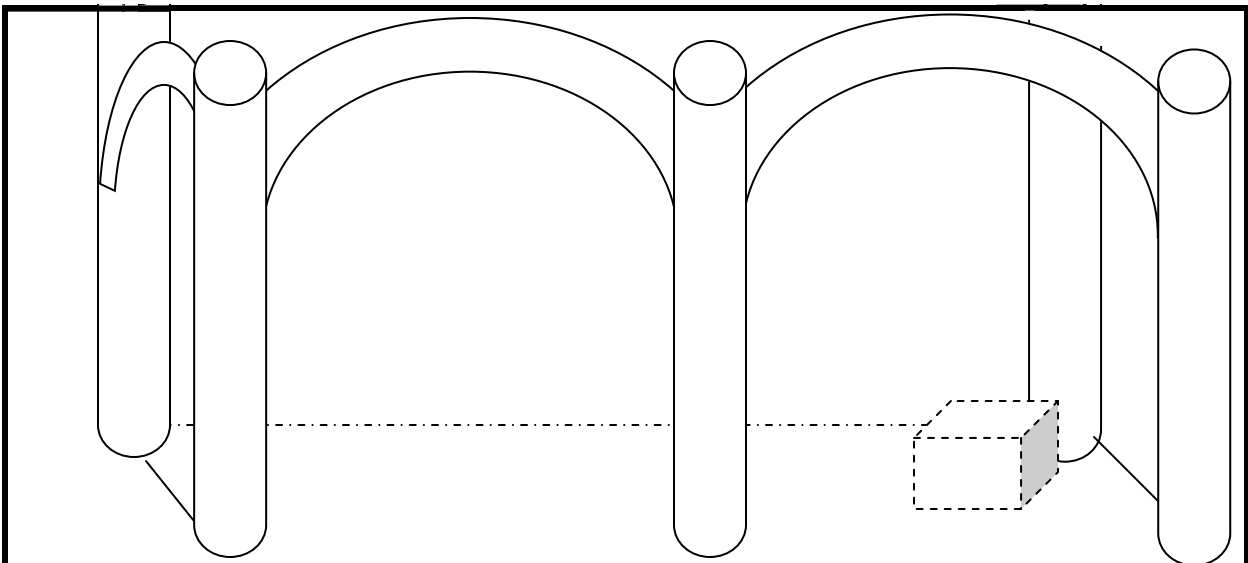
Blessed Fra Angelico, thank you for using your artistic talent to give the world heavenly images for prayer. Help the artists of today to seek true beauty in all their work. Help each of us to use our talents for God's glory as you did. Amen. Blessed Fra Angelico, pray for us!

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Three things stand out in the artwork of Blessed Fra Angelico:

1. His paintings seem filled with grace and peace (angelic).
2. He was one of the first artists to use perspective (buildings at angles to make things look 3-D instead of flat).
3. If you look closely, many of his paintings of Jesus or Mary include a person who was not alive at the time of the story. Why? When we pray, we enter into the mysteries. For this reason, Fra Angelico painted Saint Dominic or other Dominican Saints praying in the corners of his pictures. Sometimes they are looking at the scene; sometimes they are reading Scripture, thinking about the scene.

Within the archways below, draw the Angel Gabriel inviting Our Lady to be God's Mother. In the background, draw yourself looking at Mary. Use the small box as a bench for Mary to sit on. You may look at one of Fra Angelico's paintings of the Annunciation to help you.



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PRAYER:

Pray the Fourth Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple. Reflect on the way Joseph and Mary offered their firstborn Son to God, and how we can imitate them.

**REVIEW:**

What is stewardship?

Who is Blessed Fra Angelico?

GROWTH IN STEWARDSHIP:

Describe what you did to grow in stewardship this month and whether it helped you.

What do you need to work on most to grow in stewardship this year?

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