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365 Fun Facts for Catholic Kids

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Introduction

Got a minute? Good! That's all it will take to treat yourself to some fun facts, daffy definitions, and saintly surprises! There's one in here for each day of the year!

Learn about heroes and heretics, papal bulls and bumblebees, ants and can'ts, cannons and cans, lions and legends, and a whole lot more.

Look up today, look up yesterday, look up last week. Look up your birthday, your best friend's birthday, or your unbirthday! But look up! Life is fun. Facts are fun. And so is this book.

Don't wait. Don't hesitate. You'll find an idea to help you meditate and cogitate — on every date! It's great!



January 1

Did you know the calendar the world uses today was put together by a POPE? Did you know the Romans named the first month of the year “January” because of a legend about a two-faced man? Did you know Paul Revere was born on January 1? Did you know it’s going to be a lot of fun to find out answers to some questions you never even thought of yet? Read on — and by the end of this year, when someone asks you, “Did you know?” you can answer, “Sure, I know! Do you?”

January 2

In January, when a new year begins, everybody gets a new calendar to keep up with the new days in the new year! But one year everybody got a REALLY new calendar — one that changed around the days and dates! It was called the Gregorian calendar — and you know why? Because it was made by Pope Gregory! Now even before Jesus was born people had been trying to make calendars, but none of them ever worked quite right. So the Pope decided it was time somebody made a CORRECT calendar! And he did. And it's still in use today! And it's still correct! This year remember Gregory the Pope — and don't mope . . . learn to cope . . . always hope . . . and never say nope! That way EVERY day will be a great day!

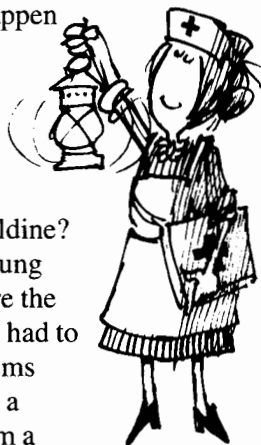


January 3

Now what about January and that two-faced man? Well, way back in the time of the Romans, they had a lot of legends and stories. One of them was about Janus, who was supposed to have two faces — one in front and the other in back — so he could look ahead to the future and also could look back at the past. Since a new year is the end of the past year and the beginning of a future year, they thought it would be a good idea to name the first month of the year after Janus — and they named it January. Do you think that was a good idea? Do you look ahead to the future or back to the past? It's a good idea to look both ways — but not at the same time! Remember, you only have ONE face! But what a nice one!

January 4

Today's the feast day of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton — a lady who never knew when to give up! She was once a beautiful and wealthy young woman who had a good husband and five healthy children. She seemed to have everything; but you know what happened? Her husband got sick and died, his business failed, and she lost all her money. Then two of her daughters died too. She was very sad, but did she give up? She did not! She just worked harder and prayed harder! And you know what happened? She became a teacher and opened the **FIRST** American Catholic school and then opened the **FIRST** American orphanage and then founded the **FIRST** American Order of nuns — the Sisters of Charity. Finally, she also became the **FIRST** born-in-America saint! Wow! That's a lot of firsts! If you ever feel sad because something bad has happened to you, don't give up. Try again — and maybe **YOU** can make some "first" things happen too!



January 5

Do you think a saint would ever have a horse named Geraldine? Well, today's saint — John Neumann — did! When he was a young priest, he and Geraldine often rode through the wilderness where the Indians lived! There were no churches there, so sometimes John had to offer Mass on somebody's kitchen table! He also wrote catechisms (books to help children learn about religion) and finally became a bishop and saint! Do you know who **YOUR** bishop is? Write him a letter today and tell him who **YOU** are!

January 6

Did you know every month has a special flower? The flower for January is the snowdrop. Its blossoms are as white as snow and it often blooms even before all the snow has melted! If **YOU** were a delicate flower, would you be brave enough to stick your head up in the cold snow? Sometimes it's hard to do what you're supposed to do, so ask God to help you be brave enough to always "stick up" for what's right!



January 7

Did you know a tailor could become president of the United States? Today's the birthday of Millard Fillmore, a tailor who sewed and made clothes for people. His family was very poor and lived in a log cabin, but he was ambitious and a hard worker. So he studied law and then taught school and finally became a congressman! In 1848 he was elected vice-president, but only two years later President Zachary Taylor died, and the one-time tailor became president of the United States! Would YOU like to be president? If you were, what would you do to make America better?

January 8

Did you know that each month has a special "jewel"? If you were born in January, your "birthstone" is the garnet. It's a dark red stone and is a symbol of loyalty. Always be loyal — to your family, your friends, and especially to God.

January 9

Did you ever see a "hot air" balloon? Each one is decorated in beautiful colors and designs and is big enough to lift a basket in which several people can ride! It was on January 9, 1793, when the first balloon flight was made in America. A man named Francois Blanchard took off from the yard of the Old Walnut Street prison in Philadelphia and ballooned his way to New Jersey! Would you like to take a balloon ride? You could soar high, high into the sky and look down at the world below. What would you see? Who would you see? When God looks at the world and then looks at you, what kind of person does HE see?





January 10

Brrr! In many parts of the world, January is a month for snow — time to go sledding, make snowmen, and have snowball fights. Did you know that no two snowflakes are exactly alike? Every single snowflake is different and unique — just like every single person is different and special. No one else is just like YOU! You are different and special and no one else could ever take your place. So be proud to be you and always try to be the best “you” that you can be!

January 11

It's another day to fly high! On this day in 1935, a famous woman airplane pilot named Amelia Earhart took off from Hawaii and flew to California. This wouldn't be so unusual today, but it was then because she was the **FIRST** woman to ever fly solo — all alone — across the Pacific Ocean. Sometimes it's scary to be all alone, isn't it? But you know what? You are never **REALLY** all alone because God is always with you.