

SJS Faith Hero

Reflection by SJS Parent - Meghan Pesko

I grew up Catholic, so as a child I became familiar with many of the saints recognized by the Church that are of European descent. In my adult life, I've been happy to discover that there are saints of all races and backgrounds who hail from countries around the world. On one hand, maybe that should be obvious -- one of the great things about the Catholic faith is, after all, its universality. There are Catholics in every country of the world, and the Mass is celebrated in a multitude of places and languages. But on the other hand, I think it is easy to fall prey to the assumption that anyone who is Catholic or Christian looks "just like me"--it's so refreshing to be reminded that the church is made up of folks from all over the world, who might look and speak and think totally differently from the way I look and think and speak. The Church is big enough for all of us. And learning about saints and faith heroes from all different races and places is a reminder that there are as many paths to holiness as there are humans that God created.

St. Martin is an inspiration to me because, even though many in the society of his time (and the church of his time) treated him as "less than" because of his mixed-race status, he refused to accept that lie, and held on to the truth that he was made in God's image and was of incredible worth to God -- as are we all. And St. Martin was able to see that sacred dignity in everyone from the crabby (and frankly even racist) clergy he interacted with to the poverty-stricken beggar covered in sores that he encountered on the streets. He had a servant's heart, and did his best to see God in the person in front of him. My prayer is that, through St. Martin's intercession, we might all get better at this. St. Martin de Porres, pray for us!



Image Source:
<https://www.deviantart.com/theophilia/art/St-Martin-de-Porres-icon-713179231>

Additional Resources:
<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-martin-de-porres>

Reflection question for parents and families:

Who are your faith heroes? Do they tend to be of the same ethnic or racial background as you? How can you expand your vision to see holiness in people and places that you may have overlooked?