Saint Aloysius Gonzaga • Saint stories

Have one of your brothers or sisters or even a friend gotten really sick? Were you told to stay away from them so you wouldn't get sick? St. Aloysius Gonzaga took that risk!

He grew up in a very wealthy family. His father wanted him to be a soldier "just like him!" In fact, at the age of 4 years old, he began his training as a soldier and a courtier (a person who works as an advisor or companion to the king or queen). Granted, Aloysius lived 450 years ago. But still that was a young age to begin training.

Around the age of 8, Aloysius began to suffer from a kidney disease, and so he had to take it easy. While resting, he read about the lives of saints, did spiritual reading and prayed. (Most of us at this age are just learning how to read!) By 9 years old, he made a vow never to marry. Whenever possible, this young man would go out among the poor children and teach them their catechism!

It took Aloysius a long time to convince his dad to let him join the Jesuit order. But finally he consented. At 17 years old, Aloysius joined the Jesuits.

But something terrible hit Italy where he lived in 1591 – the plague. Hundreds of people died from this awful disease. (Remember, way back then, they didn't have medicine like we have now. Also, things were not as clean. Trash and waste were often just dumped outside the house into the street. … YUCK!)

Aloysius took care of those that were sick with the plague. He was never a very strong and healthy person, and he caught the disease too. On June 21, 1591, St. Aloysius Gonzaga died.

Feast day: June 21

St. Aloysius Gonzaga, pray for us!

Activity: Share a Bible story

With your siblings, parents or friends, pick a Bible story and act it out for the rest of the family. Some good choices are:

The Prodigal Son (Lk 15: 11-32)

The Good Samaritan (Lk 10: 25-37)

The Annunciation (Lk 1: 26-38)

The Parable of the Sower (Lk 8: 4-8)

Or,

If you are old enough to read on your own, choose a story from the Bible and read it to someone you love.