

## Will You Be My Saint Valentine?

By Beth Beall

Although he died a very long time ago, Saint Valentine is still an example to us of courage and loving kindness. Listen as he tells his story, and then choose an activity to give thanks for the gift of love.



### For

Just for Kids

### Season

Winter

### Needed

Story on page three below, paper or index cards and pen/pencil, *or* tortillas, strawberry cream cheese, lunchmeat and cheese, *or* pizza dough, spaghetti sauce, mozzarella cheese and pizza toppings, *or* a pen or pencil to complete the word puzzle on page three.

### Activity Plan

1. Prayer helps us to quiet down and listen for God. Begin your activity time by praying the words below, or by praying words that come from your own heart.

*God of Love, help us to share your love with others no matter what. Thank you for Valentine. Thank you for the example of his courage and kindness. Amen.*

2. Read the story of Saint Valentine on page four, below. Read it on your own, or invite someone else to read it with you.
3. When you have finished reading the story, think about one or more of the following questions:
  - I wonder which parts of the story you like the best?
  - Pretend that you are one of Emperor Claudius' advisers. The emperor tells you that he is thinking about making marriage illegal, and he wants to know what you think about the idea. What do you say to him?
  - I wonder why Valentine didn't pretend to give up following Jesus so that he could save his own life?
4. You might enjoy watching a brief video about Saint Valentine on YouTube. Here is a video to check out. It is just over a minute long. [The History of St. Valentine's Day](#)
5. Pick one or more of the following activities to do on your own or with your family.

**Create Hidden Love Notes.** Since Saint Valentine had to marry people in secret, let's create love notes and hide them for others to discover. You will need index cards or a larger piece of paper that has been cut or torn into smaller pieces. On one side of each card, write "I love you because" and on the back, write one reason why you love that person. When you are finished, hide the cards for the person or people you are making them for. It might be a good idea to hide the cards in a place where you know the person will find them (such as in a shoe or inside a book they are reading)!

**Make Valentine-themed Food!** Ask a parent if you can help to prepare a Saint Valentine's lunch or dinner. Here are two ideas:

+Sandwich wraps: you will need flour tortillas (one for each person), strawberry cream cheese, lunch meat and cheese. You might also like to add some lettuce. Lay each tortilla flat on your workspace, and spread a layer of strawberry cream cheese on the tortilla. Red and pink have become the colors associated with Valentine's Day, and strawberry cream cheese is a wonderful shade of pink. Then add the meat and cheese, and lettuce if you are using it. Roll up each tortilla, serve, and enjoy!

+Pizza: you will need pizza dough, spaghetti sauce, mozzarella cheese, and toppings of your choice. If you use "sturdy" meats like pepperoni or salami, it might be fun to cut them into heart shapes with the help of an adult. Many grocery stores sell pizza dough. You will begin by putting a little bit of flour on your workspace, and then placing the dough on the workspace. Gently shape the dough into a heart. Place the dough on a baking sheet that has been sprayed or brushed with a little bit of oil. Add the sauce, and then add the other toppings. End by adding the cheese last. Bake your pizza for about 15 minutes at 450-degrees. If your pizza isn't done, bake it a little longer. ***Make sure an adult helps you around the oven.***

**Valentine Word Puzzle.** There is a word puzzle on below. See how many smaller words you can create from the phrase, "Happy Saint Valentine's Day!"

**How many smaller words can you form from the phrase below?  
Write your answers on this page.**

**"HAPPY SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY"**



## The Story of Saint Valentine

My name is Valentine. I am called a saint because many people saw the light of Christ shining through me. I was born long, long ago in ancient Rome. When I grew up, I became both a healer and a priest.

When I was an adult, a man named Claudius the Second was the Roman Emperor. Claudius felt a lot of pressure and stress because Rome was being attacked from all sides. Claudius needed more men to fight in the Roman army, but many men said, "We do not want to be soldiers. The soldiers do not get to see their wives and children for a long time. Being a soldier is too hard."

Claudius thought to himself, "Hmm, the men in my empire do not want to be soldiers because they do not want to leave their wives and children. What shall I do? I need more men if I am going to win battles." Then an idea hit Claudius. He made an official decree stating that no one was allowed to get married! "If you are not married, you will not have wives and children to miss. Then you can be my soldiers! Marriage is now officially illegal!" he announced.

When Emperor Claudius made marriage illegal, many people in the empire became very sad. Some of my friends who were priests were afraid of Claudius, and they refused to marry the couples who came to them. I was afraid of Claudius too, but I knew that I needed to listen to what God was saying to me. And I believed God was telling me that I should perform a wedding ceremony for any couple who requested it. I began to marry people in secret, and word began to spread. Soon more and more couples came to me, asking me to marry them.

Finally, however, news of my actions reached Claudius. The emperor sent soldiers to arrest me. He told me that if I stopped following Jesus, he would spare my life. I told the emperor that I would never stop following Jesus. The emperor said that he would have me executed for not obeying him. And that's exactly what he did: Emperor Claudius had me thrown into jail until the time came for my execution.

When I was in jail, some of the couples I had married visited me and brought me flowers and letters. Their loving kindness touched my heart. Also while I was in jail, I became good friends with the daughter of my jailer. She would visit me almost every day, and we talked about God's love and the beauty of friendship.

The night before I was killed, I asked my jailer for a piece of paper, a pen, and a string. I wrote a letter to the jailer's daughter, thanking her for being my friend. I signed the letter, "From your Valentine." I looked around my jail cell at the flowers some of the married couples had given me. I selected one of those flowers and wrapped it inside the letter, then tied the letter with the string. In the morning, as the guards led me off to my death, I handed the letter to my jailer, and asked him to give it to his daughter.

I died on February 14, 270. I hear that people around the world still celebrate the gift of love on February 14 by sharing cards and flowers with one another. I hope that on February 14 of this year, God will help you to notice all of the people who love you, and that you will thank them for that gift of love.

Thank you for listening to my story. *From your Valentine.*

