

Faith Tidbits..
*a little food for thought
and some knowledge
about your
Catholic faith*

October 2009

This monthly series will answer questions you always wondered about or questions you never even thought to ask... all about our Catholic Faith. If you have a question you want answered, call Diane Hardick at 633-3672.

Enjoy some Tidbits.....

1. Since the fourteenth century the Swiss Guards have served as the official Vatican police officers and the Pope's body guards. They number 110, plus six officers. Their main responsibility is to guard the apostolic palaces. Their red, yellow and blue uniforms were designed by Michelangelo.
2. As a mere 10 year old, Saint Martin became a catechumen (one to prepare for Baptism) on his own initiative. As the son of a military man, however, he was forced into the army against his will when he was 15. While stationed at Amiens, Martin had an experience which changed his life. On a bitterly cold day, Martin met a poor man, hardly clothed, trembling in the cold and begging from passersby at the city gate. The young soldier had nothing but his weapons and his clothes. He drew his sword and cut his cloak in two, and then gave one half to the beggar and wrapped himself in the other half. Many mocked him, while others were ashamed for having ignored the poor man's misery. That night in his sleep, Martin saw Christ dressed in the half of the garment he had given away, and heard him say, "Martin, still a catechumen, has covered me with this garment." As a result, as the story goes, went immediately to be Baptized. Since then, many have referred to the incident saying that Martin gave him "*the shirt off his back.*"
3. Halloween has its origin in pre-Christian times and there is no direct connection between this day and any Christian tradition. It takes its name from the eve of the holy day of All Saints in November 1: All Hallows Eve. It was a belief among the Celtic people in Wales, Ireland, Scotland and Brittany that on this night evil spirits, demons and witches roamed freely to greet their season of winter darkness. These would threaten, scare, and play tricks on people. The only way to be safe was to bribe them with treats or to pass as one of them by dressing and acting like them. Halloween customs survived into contemporary times with hardly any change. They were not widely observed in this country until the potato famine in Ireland in the 1840's which caused a massive migration of the Irish, a Celtic people. The traditions included outlandish costumes, carving jack-o-lanterns, trick or treating for sweets. and ghost stories. Costumes have changed with the times—they tend to be cute rather than scary. And the children are more caught up in getting a bag of candy, then keeping away the ghosts and witches.
4. Did you know that if you need extra help for a problem you are having, that there are Patron Saints for many areas of life. Patron Saints are special protectors or guardians for different occupations, illnesses, causes, churches and countries. Here are just a few of them:

Bankers and Accountants – St. Matthew	Advertising – St. Bernardine of Siena
Air Travelers – St. Joseph of Cupertino	Cancer Patients – St. Peregrine Laziosi
Firemen – St. Barbara	Girls – St. Maria Goretti
Headaches – St. Teresa of Avila	Heart Patients – St. John of God
Lawyers – St. Thomas More	School Teachers – St. John Baptist de la Salle
Widows – St. Frances of Rome	Young people – St. Aloysius Gonzaga

If you want more information on your Saint, or to look up more Patron Saints, you can go online to www.catholic.org/saints.