

Alternative Halloween Party

Why an All Saints' Day party

"Halloween" refers to the day before All Saints Day, that is, "All Hallows Eve." The word "hallow" is not used much in current English, but we pray in the Our Father, "hallowed be thy name." Something or someone who is hallowed is considered and treated as holy.

So we celebrate the "hallowed" people who have lived before us, the saints. All Saints Day, November 1, or All Saints Day Eve, October 31, are great days to have a saints-themed party for kids.

Theme ideas

The book *Halloween Alternatives* gives recipe, costume, and game ideas, along with reproducibles, for three themed parties:

- All Saints party
- Bible saints party
- American saints party.

Other ideas are:

- Saints of the 20th Century party
- Missionary saints party
- The Miracles of Jesus party

Examples of saints of the 20th Century are Maximillian Kolbe, Bl. Mother Teresa, Maria Goretti, Padre Pio, Katherine Drexel, Edith Stein, Francis Cabrini, Gianna Beretta Molla, Bl. James Alberione, and Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassatti.

For a Missionary Saints party, you could focus on people who left their own country to bring the message of Jesus to another people. Examples include Bl. Damien of Molokai, Francis Xavier, Frances Cabrini, Bl. Mother Teresa, Peter the Apostle, Paul the Apostle, Patrick, John de Brebeuf, and Isaac Jogues.

For a party with the theme of the miracles of Jesus, children could dress up as biblical characters connected with the miracles Jesus performed. One example is Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead (costume idea: wrapped in a large sheet; see John 11:17-44). Another is one of the servants who poured the water-made-wine at the wedding at Cana (come carrying a large water jar; see John 2:1-11). The healed paralytic could come carrying a "stretcher" made out of cardboard (see the story in Mark 2:1-12). A boy could come as the boy who provided the five loaves and two fish (made out of cardboard, or real rolls and goldfish crackers, in a basket; see John 6:1-14). These are just a few ideas!

For research on the saints' lives, there are several books published by the Daughters of St. Paul that can be helpful. For American saints (from North, Central, and South

America), check out *Holy Friends: Thirty Saints and Blesseds of the Americas*, by Diana Amadeo. For saints of all times and places, check out *57 Stories of Saints*, by Anne Eileen Heffernan, FSP, or *Saints for Young Readers for Every Day of the Year*. For younger children there is *Little Book of Saints Vols. 1- 4*.

Recipe ideas

Halo vegetables with dip

A healthy snack could be vegetables cut in circles (carrot rounds, bell pepper rings, cucumber rounds) to be dipped in a traditional vegetable dip.

Cream Cheese Clouds

Another simple snack could be small mounds of cream cheese, with small round pretzels to dip into it.

Saint cookies

Using any cut-out cookie recipe, make "gingerbread" people. As a fun activity, let the children decorate the cookies as saints. (Tubes of icing, along with sprinkles and other decorations will work well.)

The Miraculous Catch of Fish (Luke 5:1-11)

Remembering Saint Peter and the fish he caught when he Jesus told him to cast his net, stir a drop or two of blue food color into cream cheese. Spread it as the sea on a plate and use goldfish crackers to scoop it up.

The Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11)

Grape juice mixed with sprite will make "Cana Punch." (You could also make a white-iced cake as a "wedding cake.")

(Other recipe ideas available in *Halloween Alternatives*, by Sr. Anne Joan Flanagan.)

Game Ideas

Whose Halo? (a memory game)

Prepare a tray with holy cards of various saints spread out on it. Cover the tray and place in front of the children, then take away the cover. Have them look at the tray for one minute and then cover it up again. See how many of the saints they can remember. You can make it a competition and have each person write down what they remember, or you can make it collaborative and together try to make a complete list.

This can also be done on a table mixing statues, medals, and holy cards of saints. In the case of a large group, when it would be hard for them to get close and see the holy cards, use larger framed pictures and statues.

Say the Name! (a game of quick recognition)

Two adult assistants stand on two chairs. They hold a sheet lengthwise between them, so that the sheet acts as a curtain wall, dividing the space in half. The children (dressed in their saints' costumes) are divided into two groups, one on each side of the curtain. Each side quietly (so the other side doesn't hear) selects one person to stand directly in front of the sheet. At the count of three, the two adult assistants quickly lower the sheet so that two children are looking at each other. The first of these two children to call out the name of the other child's saint wins. The child who loses goes over to the side of the child who won. The game is over when all of the children are on one side of the screen.

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