

Even journalists have a patron saint

Stephanie Yeagle | Jan. 24, 2014 NCR Today

Today is the Feast of St. Francis de Sales, the patron saint of writers and journalists. I had no idea that writers and journalists had a patron saint, and I wasn't even sure who Francis de Sales was.

So, after some quick research, I discovered that, born in 1567, Francis de Sales came from a privileged family, earned his doctorate in law and theology, evangelized to Protestants, escaped assassins and was friends with King Henry IV.

He was also an amazing preacher, a friend to the poor, and is known as the "Gentleman Saint" due to his patience and gentleness.

Francis de Sales died in 1622, was beatified in 1661 by Pope Alexander VII, and was canonized four years later.

Pope Pius XI proclaimed St. Francis de Sales as the patron saint of writers and journalists in 1923, because he used flyers and books to help guide people spiritually and convert Calvinists.

Patience and gentleness are not usually characteristic traits of hard-nosed journalists. We are more known for our tireless investigating and probing questions. But maybe we can work harder to ensure our stories mean something. A good journalist writes a story that makes the reader think; a great journalist writes a story that makes the reader feel.

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