

André Bessette

A Heart of Strength

1845–1937

Born in Mont-Saint Grégoire,
near Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Feast Day: January 6

Patronage: People who are sick
or handicapped, and poor people

Text by Barbara Yoffie
Illustrated by Katherine A. Borgatti



Liguori

Dedication

To my family:
my parents Jim and Peg,
my husband Bill,
our son Sam and daughter-in-law Erin,
and our precious grandchildren
Ben, Lucas, and Andrew

To all the children I have had the privilege of
teaching throughout the years.

Imprimi Potest:

Harry Grile, CSsR, Provincial
Denver Province, the Redemptorists

Published by Liguori Publications
Liguori, Missouri 63057

To order, call 800-325-9521
Liguori.org

Copyright © 2013 Liguori Publications

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior written permission of Liguori Publications.

p ISBN 978-0-7648-2240-7
e ISBN 978-0-7648-6830-6

Liguori Publications, a nonprofit corporation, is an apostolate of the Redemptorists. To learn more about the Redemptorists, visit Redemptorists.com.

Printed in the United States of America
24 23 22 21 20 / 6 5 4 3 2
First Edition

Dear Parents and Teachers:

Saints and Me! is a series of children's books about saints. Six books make up the first set: *Saints of North America*. In this set, each book tells a thought-provoking story about a heavenly hero.

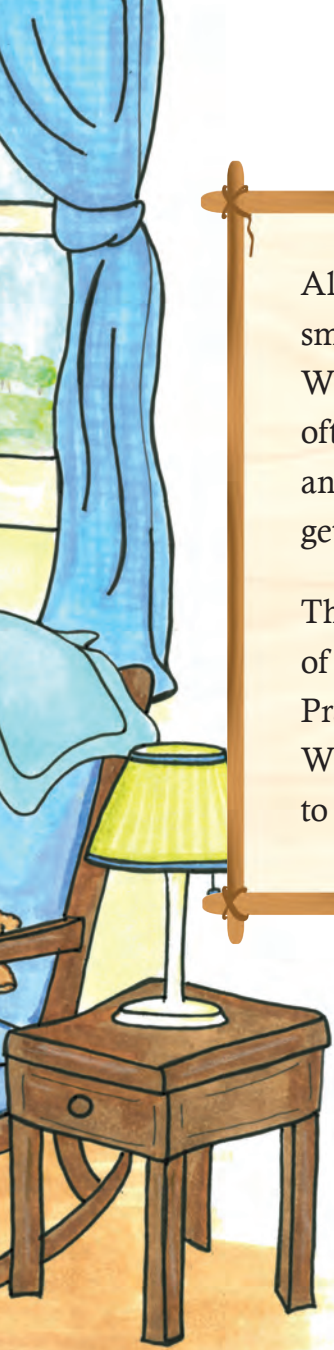
Saints of North America includes the heroic lives of six saints from the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Saints Kateri Tekakwitha and Elizabeth Ann Seton were both born in the United States. Saint Juan Diego was born in Mexico, and Saint André Bessette was from Canada. European missionaries also came to North America to spread the Catholic faith, making it their home while they worked with people in the New World. Saints Rose Philippine Duchesne and Damien de Veuster were missionary saints.

Through the centuries, saints have always been dear to Catholics, but *why*? In most instances, ordinary people were and are transformed by the life of Jesus and therefore model Christ's life for us. It is our Lord who makes ordinary people extraordinary. As your children come to know the saints, it is our hope that they will come to understand and identify that they, too, are *called to be saints*.

Which saint wanted to work with Native Americans? Who wanted to work with the sick people on the island of Molokai, Hawaii? To which saint did the Virgin Mary appear? Who loved Saint Joseph? Which saint started the first American religious community of women? Do you know which saint is the patron of nature? Find the answers in the *Saints of North America*, *Saints and Me!* set and help your child identify with the lives of the saints.

Introduce your children or students to the *Saints and Me!* series as they:

- READ** about the lives of the saints and are inspired by their stories.
- PRAY** to the saints for their intercession.
- CELEBRATE** the saints and relate to their lives.



Alfred Bessette was born in a small town near Montreal, Canada. When Alfred was a baby he was often sick. His mother would hold him and whisper, "Little Alfred, you will get better soon."

The Bessette family did not have a lot of money, but they had faith in God. Prayer was very important to them. When Alfred prayed, he felt very close to God. He felt peaceful and happy.



Alfred was nine years old when his father died in an accident. A few years later his mother died of tuberculosis. Now orphans, the Bessette children went to live with relatives.

Alfred went to live on a farm with his aunt and uncle. He tried to do his chores. "Can you feed the chickens for me?" asked his uncle. The bucket of feed was heavy. Alfred had trouble lifting it.

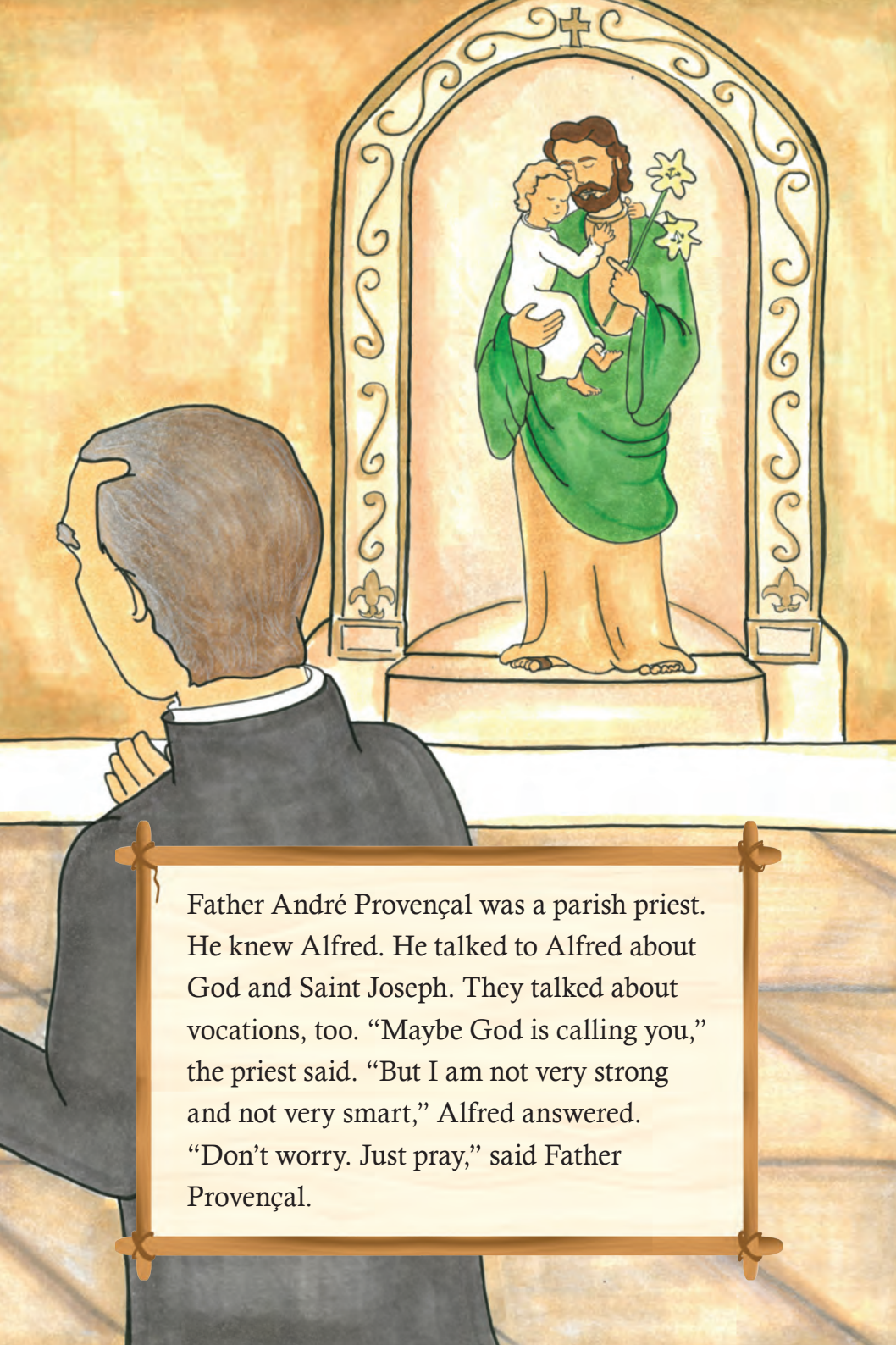




“There must be a job I can do,”
thought Alfred. Over the next few years
he worked as a baker, a shoemaker, and
a factory worker. The work was too hard.
Alfred got sick.

During these difficult times Alfred
would pray. He prayed to God and
his favorite saint—Saint Joseph:
“Please help me, Saint Joseph.”





Father André Provençal was a parish priest. He knew Alfred. He talked to Alfred about God and Saint Joseph. They talked about vocations, too. “Maybe God is calling you,” the priest said. “But I am not very strong and not very smart,” Alfred answered. “Don’t worry. Just pray,” said Father Provençal.