



St. Blaise
February 3

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d. 316 • Ancient Armenia (modern-day Turkey)

If you go to church on February 3, your priest might give the blessing of the throats after Mass. He will hold two crossed candles (the candles were blessed during the Feast of the Presentation, which celebrates when Mary and Joseph offered Jesus to God in the Temple) to your throat and say these words, "Through the intercession of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Not too much is known about St. Blaise, except that he was a bishop and martyr. But there are many legends told about him.

St. Blaise was a doctor who healed the sick and wounded. But he felt called by God to heal a different kind of sickness, the sickness of the soul. Blaise became a bishop so he could heal the soul's wounds by ministering the sacraments and forgiving people's sins.

At that time, Christians were persecuted because they did not worship false gods. The governor arrested Blaise and sent him to jail because he refused to renounce his Faith. As Blaise was put in jail, a distressed woman brought her son to the jail cell. A fishbone was stuck in the boy's throat. The terrified mother worried that her son would choke to death. She begged Blaise for help. She knew he was a holy man and that God would listen to his prayers. Blaise felt compassion for the mother and her boy. He prayed to God for a cure, and God listened to his prayer. The boy was healed, and his mother cried tears of joy.

Despite this miracle, the governor still ordered Blaise to renounce his Faith. Blaise would not deny Jesus, so the governor had him tortured and put to death. Blaise became a glorious martyr for the Faith! St. Blaise, protect me from all sickness, in particular sickness of the throat!