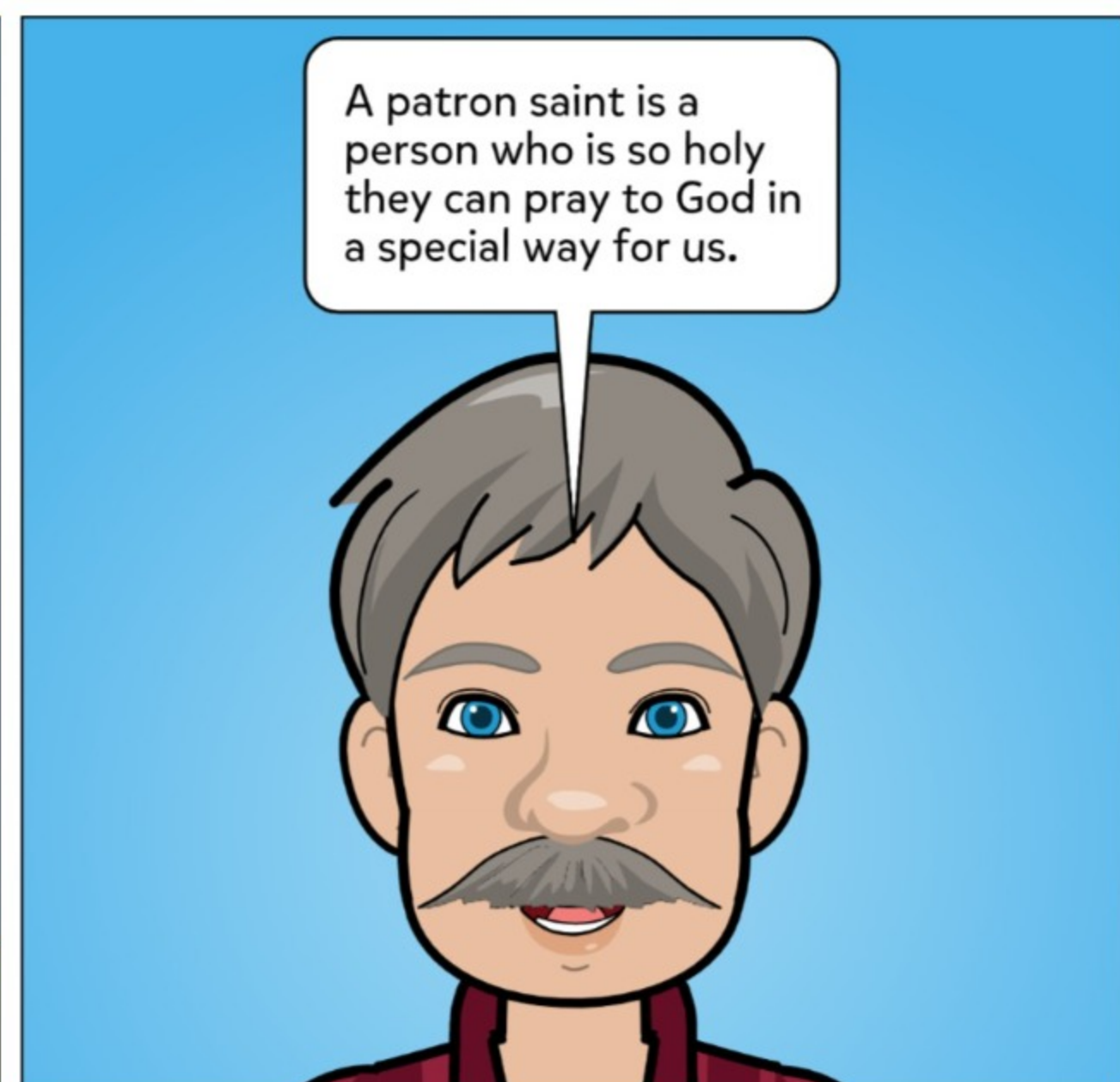


Saint Francis of Assisi

by Paula de Rushe - Quintal

Saint Dunstan's Catholic Church
Toronto, ON



YEARS PASSED AND FRANCIS WENT TO WORK WITH HIS FATHER, A WEALTHY SILK MERCHANT.



Come and buy our finest cloth! The best in the land!



Francis, you are doing a good job. I am leaving to tend to other business. Be sure to make lots of sales today!



Please sir. Can you help a man out? I'm hungry and have no money to buy food.



Go away! I have no money to give you. You are scaring away my customers!



BUT THEN FRANCIS FELT SORRY FOR THE BEGGAR...

Geez, he looks so sad.



Stop! Here is some money. Go buy something to eat!



Francis! What do you mean there is no money? You gave away all my money to that beggar?



Are you crazy? Don't ever, ever do something like that again!



One day I will be able to do what I want.



Don't be sad mother. I'm off to serve in the war, but I will come home famous. Just you wait and see.



FRANCIS JOINED THE MILITARY

You better listen to me, soldier!



HE WAS INJURED AND CAPTURED IN BATTLE.

AS FRANCIS LAY RECOVERING HE HEARD A VOICE

You are a prisoner of war but we will take care of you.

Why do I keep getting these dreams at night? It's like a vision.

Francis, it is time for you to do my work. Listen to your heart. Listen to the Word of God. Soon you will be well and return home.

So did Francis ever return home, granddad?

O yes he certainly did, Katie. But Francis got into trouble with his father again.

One day, Francis was praying in an old church when he heard the voice again. This time it said, "Francis, Francis! Help me rebuild my house for it is falling into ruins!"

Francis finally realized that the voice he kept hearing was God calling to him.

Francis thought God was referring to the old church. So he sold some of his father's goods without permission. Then he gave the money to the church for the repairs.

His father was furious when he heard. He told Francis to pay him back all the money, then never come home again!

Wow! Francis must have been so sad to leave his father and mother!

I think Francis must also have been happy too. For now he understood God was calling Francis to rebuild HIS holy church. That is, to help bring people back to the House of God. Now Francis was free to humbly serve God and his people.

So what happened to Francis next, granddad?

There are great stories about his amazing love for animals. Let me tell you one of them.



ONE DAY FRANCIS AND HIS FOLLOWERS CAME TO A VILLAGE...



Francis! You cannot stay here! It is not safe!



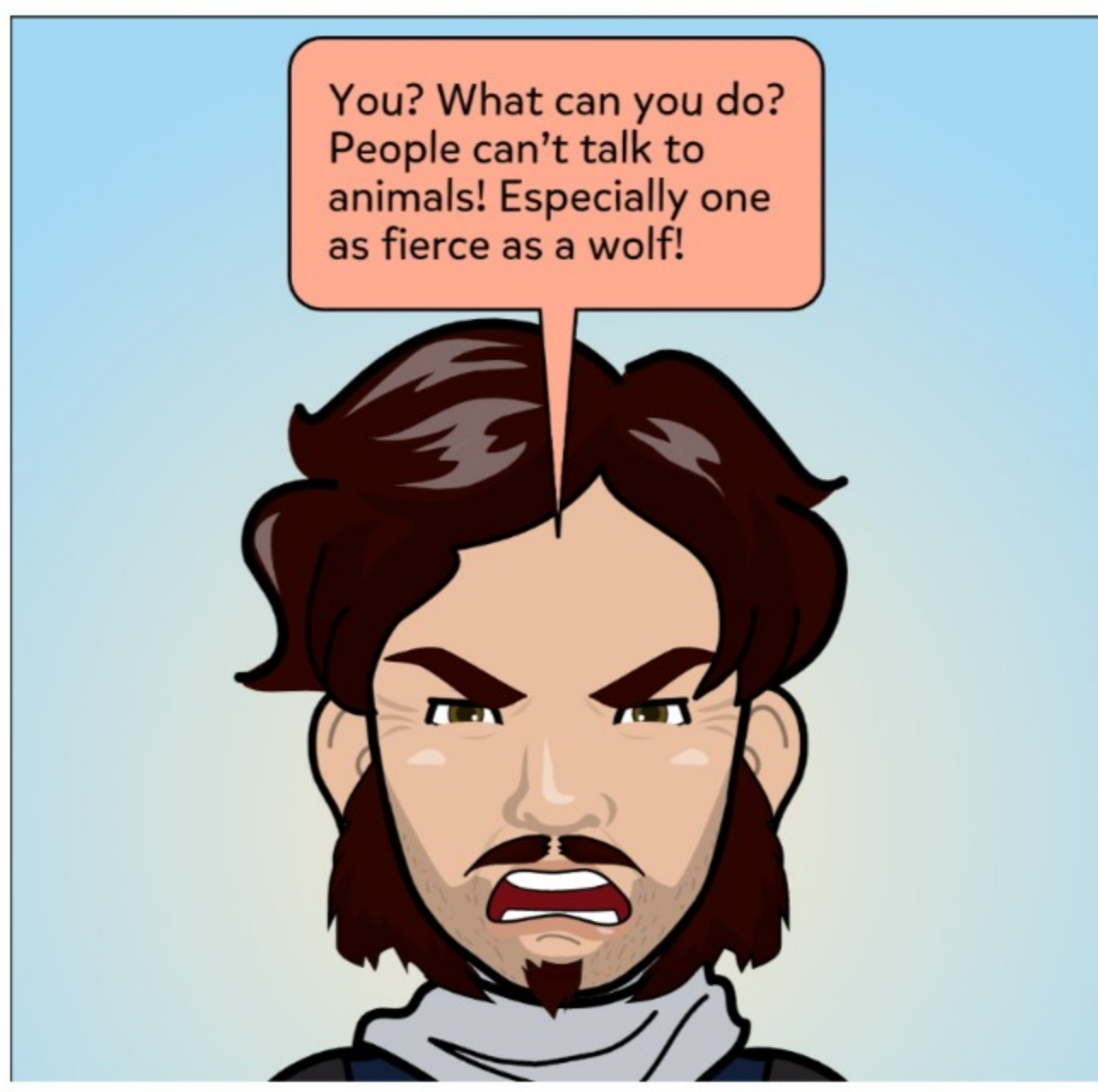
A wolf is attacking our animals every night!

We have to hunt it down and kill it!

No! Please let me have a chance to talk to the wolf first. Perhaps I can make peace between you.



You? What can you do? People can't talk to animals! Especially one as fierce as a wolf!



BUT FRANCIS CONVINCED THE VILLAGERS TO WAIT FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER. THEY LEFT HIM ALL ALONE TO CONFRONT THE WOLF AND HE ENTERED THE FOREST.



IT GREW DARK BUT FRANCIS KEPT SEARCHING FOR THE WOLF.



THEN WITH A SNARL, THE FIERCE WOLF APPEARED. READY TO ATTACK FRANCIS!



Stop! Brother Wolf, in the name of God, I command you to stop!



I come to make peace between you and the villagers. They will feed you every night. But you must never again attack them or kill their animals.



Wow! Did the wolf understand Francis? Was he saved?



Yes, and it was said that the wolf and villagers lived in peace from then on. Francis did many good things which we do know for sure.

Francis travelled to different lands teaching about the word of God. He preached about the love we should have for each other, especially for the poor.



More people joined him and they became a large group called the "Franciscan Order". They lived very simply since they gave everything to the poor. After he died, Francis was made a saint by the church.



Granddad, I want to help the poor like Saint Francis. What can I do?



That is very noble, Katie. The poor are people just like us. You can help by giving away some of your pocket money to someone who needs help.



But even a kind smile can brighten someone's day. There are many other ways you can help when you get older. Ask your mummy and daddy how they help the poor.



Yes, it makes me feel very happy inside when I help someone.



We also have Saint Francis to thank for setting up the first nativity. That makes many people happy at Christmas even up to now!



And we have a beautiful prayer to honour Saint Francis. I know you've heard it before. Let's say it together!



Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. And where there is sadness, joy.



PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCIS

PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCIS

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console. To be understood, as to understand. To be loved, as to love.



PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCIS

For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.



FEAST DAY OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI IS OCTOBER 4. WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS SHORT STORY IN OUR "LIVES OF THE SAINTS" COMICS SERIES FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG-AT-HEART. THANK YOU FOR READING. St. Dunstan's Catholic Church, Toronto, ON Canada. Jan 2021