

DETAILS



Saint Valentine the Kindhearted *The History and Legends of God's Brave and Loving Servant*

January 16, 2024 | \$18, 32 pages, hardcover | 978-1-5140-0876-8

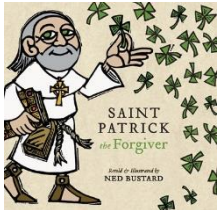
Be Inspired by Saint Valentine

We celebrate Valentine's Day with flowers, candy, and cards for the people we love. But have you ever wondered why we do this on February 14? Learn all about Saint Valentine, a man whose life of kindness and love inspires us each year to let others know how much they mean to us. Told as a charming poem and illustrated with Ned Bustard's signature linocut artwork, this book will be enjoyed by children as well as the adults who read with them. Also included is a note from the author to encourage further conversation about the content.

*Roses are red, violets are blue,
Sugar is sweet, and so are you.
This is the poem many share
with those for whom we love and care.
Flowers and candy sent our way
every year on Valentine's Day.
But why the cards that ask, "Be mine?"
—that's all from dear Saint Valentine!*

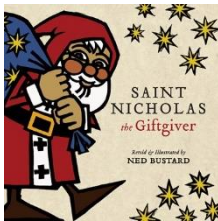
-from *Saint Valentine the Kindhearted*

Also by Ned Bustard:



Saint Patrick the Forgiver: The History and Legends of Ireland's Bishop February 21, 2023 | \$18, 32 pages, hardcover | 978-1-5140-0724-2

Did you know that Saint Patrick wasn't Irish? This children's book teaches families about the fascinating life of the real Saint Patrick and helps them discover a remarkable story of love and forgiveness along the way. Told in rollicking rhyme, this retelling also includes tools to help parents engage in conversation about the content.



Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver: The History and Legends of the Real Santa Claus October 12, 2021 | \$18, 32 pages, hardcover | 978-1-5140-0180-6

Around Christmas we think a lot about presents, but have you ever wondered why we give gifts? Learn about the life of Saint Nicholas and discover why he became known as one of the greatest giftgivers of all time. Told as a delightful poem, this colorfully illustrated children's book also includes tools to help parents engage in conversation about the content.



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Q & A



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Ned Bustard is a graphic designer, children's book illustrator, author, and printmaker. As the creative director for Square Halo Books Inc. and curator of the Square Halo Gallery, Ned has lectured at colleges, schools, churches, and conferences. His work is found in numerous titles, including *Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver*, *Saint Patrick the Forgiver*, *The O in Hope*, and *Every Moment Holy*. He lives with his family in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Saint Valentine, Passionate and Principled

What led you to choose Saint Valentine for the subject of your next children's book?

Ned Bustard: In a way, you could say that I didn't choose Valentine, Valentine chose me. It reminds me of my courtship with my wife back in college. She was interested in a number of guys but not me. Then I gave her a rather bold and direct Valentine's Day card one year and began to woo her. Before writing about Valentine, I had made a whole list of other saints I wanted to make books about, particularly focusing on female saints since I am the father of three strong daughters. But again and again when I'd talk about the series, people would beg me to consider Valentine! And then one day my editor at IVP Kids told me that their distributors were asking if IVP Kids had a Valentine's Day book, and she asked if I might want to take that project on. It was now painfully obvious that I needed to take on the saint. I mean, how many more times did Cupid need to shoot his arrows into me before I gave in?

Why should Saint Valentine be important to us, and what inspired you about Saint Valentine?

Ned: I don't go too deeply into it in the story, since the book is for kids, but I was inspired by Valentine's strong stand for the truth of God's Word in a cultural moment that was hostile to its teachings. The stories that have come down to us over the years portray a very strong, passionate, and principled man who would not follow the culture but followed Jesus, even if it meant jail and, ultimately, beheading.

What did you learn about Valentine through the process of creating this book?

Ned: The thing I learned that most shocked me about Valentine is how little we know about him! Valentine was a popular name in his time, and there are at least a few Valentines that are said to have been martyred around the fourteenth of February in AD 269. In fact, so little can be proven for sure about him that in 1969 the Roman Catholic Church actually removed him from the General Roman Calendar. The main event in my book comes from *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints* by Jacobus de Voragine. In that account, it says that a judge put Valentine's faith to the test by telling Valentine to heal his blind daughter, vowing to do anything if her sight was restored. A miracle occurred in the wake of Valentine's prayers, and following the miracle, the judge obeyed Valentine's instructions and broke all the idols around his house. The judge was then baptized by Saint Valentine, along with the judge's family and servants—over forty people.

You also wrote and illustrated [Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver](#) and [Saint Patrick the Forgiver](#). How was your experience the same or different as you wrote and illustrated *Saint Valentine the Kindhearted*?

Ned: In contrast to my Nicholas book, which took twenty years to write, and as with my Patrick book, this book was written in a few months. One thing that is the same is that all the books are written in a rhyming form. Nicholas was based on "Twas the Night Before Christmas," Patrick was based on an Irish jig, and Valentine is based on "Roses Are Red, Violets Are Blue."

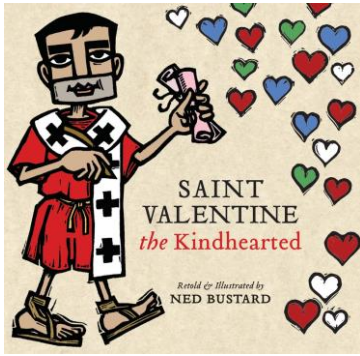


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Ned: In addition to the illustration style of hand-carved block prints, another thing that is the same with all three books is the Christ-centered focus. Yes, there is history and legends, but overall, each saint is pointing the reader to focus on Jesus and not the saint himself. And I like to think each of these godly men would be very happy with that trajectory to the stories.

Your three IVP Kids "Saint" books are illustrated using linocut artwork. What originally drew you to this artform, and how does it suit the stories you tell?

Ned: I have a great love for medieval art and find their woodcuts so enchanting. And although I have other styles I've used in the past for illustrating books, I feel like the block-printing look is such a perfect fit for books about church history. In fact, when I first started working on the story for *Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver* over twenty years ago, I drew the illustrations in the style of old woodcuts even though I didn't know how to make them for real. Later I became friends with an artist who got his MFA in printmaking, and he taught me the craft of it. What I love about the technique is that it is so hands-on, so real. Most of my other work has been in the copy/paste world of computer art and design—printmaking gets me out of that and allows me to get my hands dirty. Literally.

Is there anything else you would like to share about the creative process?

Ned: One thing I really liked about this third book in the series is all I was able to discover as I studied the clothes and art of the period. And related to the printmaking process, discovery is one of the things I enjoy about that as well. You might not think there would be many surprises since I have to methodically carve away every line that appears in each illustration. And although there is a lot of it that I have to plan, there are always a bunch of ideas that come to me in the middle of each illustration that add to the meanings I get to tuck into each picture.

What takeaways do you hope children and the adults who read with them receive from reading *Saint Valentine the Kindhearted*?

Ned: It is clear what the "big idea" is from the title of each book—*Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver*, *Saint Patrick the Forgiver*, *Saint Valentine the Kindhearted*. So generosity, forgiveness, and kindness are the takeaways. But with this new book I have another idea I'd like to communicate, and that is that love is not just romance. We are all to be loving, and that love can be of different types—it doesn't only have to be romantic. Throughout my book I demonstrate the four loves through the life of Valentine: *storge*—natural love/affection, *philia*—true-blue friendship, *eros*—romantic love, and *agape*—pure, unconditional/divine love. When the story is focusing on each one of the loves, I put colored hearts into the illustrations. For natural love the hearts are green, for friendship the hearts are blue, for romantic love the hearts are red, and for the love of God the hearts are white!



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