

# A GENTLE SAINT: ST DAMIAN

## FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

---



[Click here to play instrumental music](#)

# GATHER



Father,  
Thank you for your word.  
Help us to listen  
And show your love.  
Amen



# LISTEN: Be gentle

The third beatitude tells us:

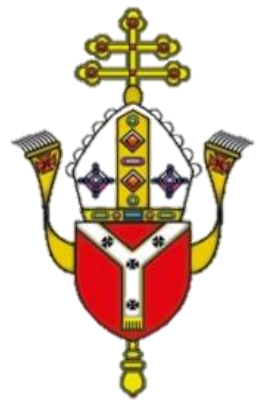
*'Blessed are the meek  
for they shall inherit  
the earth.'*



# LISTEN

Father Damian or  
Saint Damian of Molokai  
was born in Belgium on  
3rd January 1840.

His real name was  
Jozef de Veuster.

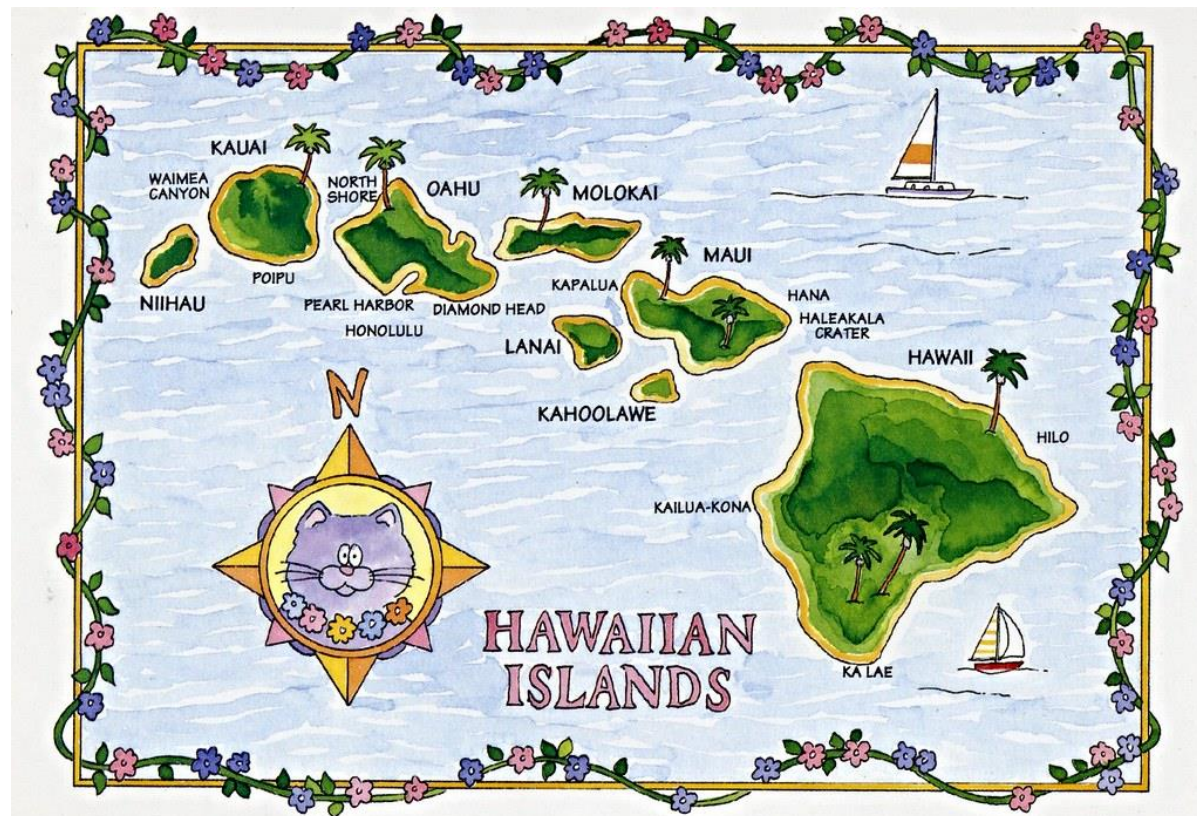


# LISTEN

He had a great devotion to St. Francis Xavier, the patron saint of missionaries.

A missionary is someone who is sent on a mission, especially one sent to do religious or charitable work in a territory or foreign country.

Every day Fr Damian prayed to be sent on a mission.



*Can you find Molokai on the map?*



# LISTEN

In 1872 there was a big outbreak of leprosy in the Hawaiian Islands in 1872.

People with leprosy were sent to live on Molokai, a bleak island off the coast.

There they lived in miserable surroundings, abandoned by the outside world.

People did not have any money to take care of those with leprosy so Fr Damian worked hard to improve their water and food supplies.



*Would you like to be a missionary here? Why?*



# LISTEN



People with leprosy are very sick and in a lot of pain.

Father Damian heard about their problems and chose to go to Molokai.

He knew that if he went to work on the island and contracted leprosy, he would not be allowed to return.



*Can you think of anyone who is sick or abandoned? Could you help them?*

# LISTEN

One of the first things Fr Damian did was to build a church.

He celebrated the sacraments and prayed with them.

His role was not limited to being a priest.

He also looked after the sick, built homes and furniture, made coffins, and dug graves.

*Which of his jobs do you think was most important? Why?*



# LISTEN



Father Damien said:

“My greatest pleasure is to serve the Lord in his poor children rejected by other people.”

“I make myself a leper with the lepers to gain all to Jesus Christ.”



*How can you serve the Lord this month?*

# LISTEN

Father Damian chose to work with the people for 16 years, caring for them.

He appealed for supplies for the people on the island.

He contracted leprosy himself and eventually died on Molokai of leprosy.

He became a saint and his feast day is 10<sup>th</sup> May.

*•Can you think of anyone who takes care of others, even if it is difficult?*



# RESPOND

What did he do to put others first?

How did he look after the earth and its people?

How was Fr Damian meek or gentle?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbDY4ANWW8M>



# RESPOND - Prayer

God our Father,

Thank you for giving us Fr Damian, a gentle and loving man who looked after highly contagious at great risk to himself.

Look after all those who are suffering due to illness at this time and strengthen those who take care of them.

Help me to be gentle too and put others' needs before my own, even when it is difficult. Amen.

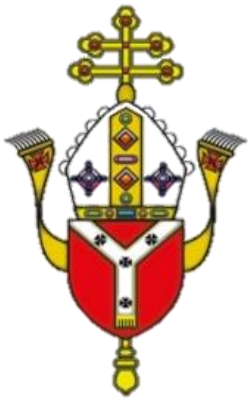


# MISSION

Choose:

- Create a fact-file or comic strip about Fr Damian and highlight what you admire most about him.
- Write an Act of Worship for St Damian's day (10<sup>th</sup> May).
- Read any of the stories about Jesus healing the lepers.
- Do something for those who are suffering or isolated (eg pray, call, spend time, donate)
- Find out more about missionaries and what they do





# BE GENTLE

[Click here to play instrumental music](#)

