

St Francis Xavier feast day – Notes for PowerPoint

This resource was designed to be spread out over the 4 weeks of Advent¹. It aims to link the life of St Francis Xavier with the issue of climate change presented in *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis' Encyclical.

Every week begins with a new fact about St Francis Xavier which can be read out in assemblies or classes. In conjunction, there is an action and a prayer which can be used to explore the issues coming from the resource.

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Slide 3 – Week 1 dates: November 30th – December 4th

Slide 4 – (Biography) On April 7, 1506, Francis Xavier was born in Xavier Castle, located near Sangüesa, in the Kingdom of Navarre (part of present-day Spain).

Photo taken by College of the Holy Cross Jesuit University, USA. Showing Xavier Castle.

Slide 5 – (B) He was a member of a noble family, and his childhood was one of privilege—however, it was disrupted by his father's death, as well as by outside efforts to take control of Navarre.

The image is of the (then) flag of the Kingdom of Navarre.

Slide 6 – (Action) During this first week of Advent, let us set aside some time to walk around in nature, breath deeper and keep in mind the birth of our world.

Slide 8 – Week 2 dates: December 7th-11th

Slide 9 – (B) When Francis met Ignatius in Paris, he was a proud, autocratic, ambitious man wanting to accomplish great deeds in the world. For three years Ignatius patiently encouraged Francis to look at his life differently.

Image shows St Francis and St Ignatius conversing, at the University of Paris

Slide 10 – (B) Francis joined Peter Faber as the first of Ignatius's companions. Francis Xavier was ordained in 1537.

In 1541 King John of Portugal asked Ignatius for priests to send to the missions in India. Despite knowing he would never see his beloved companion again, Ignatius chose Francis Xavier for the mission. Francis left for India, arriving at the city of Goa in 1542.

Slide 11 – (A) In this second week of Advent, Pope Francis gives us some good advice for little acts of sustainability we can do.

¹ The specific dates in this resource coincide with Advent 2015

You could ask your students to try one or two perhaps:

- Separate rubbish.
- Turn off unnecessary lights.
- Avoid using plastic and paper.
- Use public transport such as car-pooling.
- Show care for other living beings.
- Reduce water consumption.
- Cook only what you will eat.

Slide 13 – Week 3 dates: December 14th – 18th

Slide 14 – (B) For the next ten years the missionary Francis Xavier travelled from Goa to Cape Comorin in south India, then to the East Indies, Malacca, and the Moluccas, and onward to Japan. It was Francis Xavier’s great ambition to get permission to enter China as a missionary.

Slide 15 – (A) Sometimes we can fall into the trap of taking advantage of one another; treating others as objects. We can even do the same to the environment, thinking it’s ours to treat as we will, with no further thought for the future. This week, encourage your students to really consider all the ways they treat their friends, family and teachers, whilst at school, while we do our work and also how we treat nature. Your students can make a weekly ‘diary’ or notes of all the things they have done this week which may or may not contribute to treating others and the environment fairly.

Slide 17 – Week 4 dates: 20th Dec onwards

Slide 18 – (B) St. Francis Xavier died in 1552, exhausted from his labours and fasts, on a small island off the coast of China with a single companion at his side. His great ambition was to bring the world to Jesus Christ. Francis had little, but he preached the Gospel to the poor and sick, spending most of his time ministering to their needs. His nights were taken up in prayer. His only attention to his personal needs was to have a pair of boots. He barely ate enough to stay alive. As the missionary Francis Xavier, SJ, moved on, he left behind flourishing churches that were the foundations for the Catholic faith in Asia.

The photo was taken by Father Tim Byron SJ, in the Jesuit Mission in Manvi.

Slide 19 – (A) For this final week of Advent, your students are going to write letters to an unnamed future generation. The letters should explain to the future generation what the earth is like now, and what students think the earth is like in the future. Conclude with a prayer you have created with your hopes for our earth in the future.

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Most pictures featured in the PowerPoint were taken by Jesuit Missions or Jesuit affiliated charities, at different Jesuit projects around the world.