Saints are figures venerated in Catholic tradition and sometimes have multiple origin stories rooted in either history or folklore.

**NORD GALLERY**

**“Saint Francis”**
St. Francis Receiving the Stigmata (ca. 1400–10)

Born in Assisi to a wealthy family, Francis gave sermons in the streets and as his following grew, he sought permission from Pope Innocent III to found the Franciscan Order in 1209. He is often shown wearing a monk’s robe with a waist rope that bears three knots (signifying the Order’s vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience). He is regularly depicted receiving the Stigmata, the five wounds that correspond to Christ’s after the Crucifixion.

**CURRENTLY NOT ON VIEW**

**“Saint Sebastian”**
St. Sebastian (1993)

This is a modern reinterpretation of visual elements of the story of St. Sebastian, who is depicted in a number of other works on view at the museum. These images all express different aspects of Sebastian’s martyrdom—from the tender and personal to the ecstatic promise of his eternal reward. Here, the artist Ellen Garven uses twisted and bound copper tubes to evoke the Saint’s tortured body, which was pierced with numerous arrows.

**“Saint Michael”**
St. Michael in Combat with the Devil (ca. 1500)

St. Michael, or the Archangel Michael was mentioned in several books of the bible, where he defeats the devil in the Book of Revelation: “Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven.” He is winged and often depicted in battle with the devil, wearing a chainmail coat and armed with a shield, sword, or spear.
Paul is first mentioned in the New Testament and described as a balding, short, and ungainly man. In Medieval and Renaissance art he was often illustrated with these features, including a long dark beard. After the Counter-Reformation, when the Lutherans adopted many of his teachings, Paul fell out of favor with the Papacy and is seldom seen in art from Catholic countries. Paul’s attributes include a sword—said to be the weapon that ended his life—and a book or scroll, because he is noted as the author of the Epistles.

Nicholas is the Patron Saint of children, sailors, and travelers. Though from Myra (today part of Turkey), he is known as Saint Nicholas of Bari, a city in southern Italy to which his remains were moved in the 11th century. Three bags of gold, which are often depicted as his attributes, were secretly given by him to a poor man who could not afford dowries for his daughters. Though Nicholas has unknown historical origins, he is now widely accepted as the prototype for Santa Claus.

Catherine was the youngest born to a large family of tradesmen and notaries in Siena, Italy. From a very early age she began experiencing mystical visions, during which she claimed to be in direct communication with God. During the carnival of 1366 she is believed to have experienced mystical espousal, or “marital union,” with Christ while undergoing one of her visions. Following this event, Catherine began working with the sick and is revered for tending to cases of extreme illness.