

Struggling Sainthood  
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Depicting superheroes as clumsy real people with a dark side was a fresh take 30 years ago and now has become as predictable as extra fries in your 5 Guys bag. Still the box office says we still enjoy it. Of course, just because it's predictable doesn't mean it can't be good!

Since Greek drama, most good literature and storytelling has always given us believable and complicated characters. Holy Scripture is no different. From Noah to the apostles, we see heroes of the faith sometimes acting like villains, or as St. Paul says, chief of villains! He says, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy 1:15)

This reality should not make us careless about our sins, but it should comfort you if you suffer the same condition - which you do. We are sinners. We have been broken by the world and we have broken our world. Yet our hope is not in our own righteousness. It is solely in Christ. Like Abraham and Paul, we live by faith in God's promises in Christ.

We are saints not because of our superpowers, but Christ's. He is the one hero who has no tragic flaw or sordid past. Yet He has given us His cape in baptism and continues to confirm it through holy communion. It's really yours. It's ok to say it. You are a saint because He says so.

The Latin phrase "Simul Justus et Peccator" means simultaneously sinner and saint. Until we are buried, even the best of us believers struggle with our passions and the ways of the world. It doesn't mean that's ok, who cares. In fact, it should humble us like the thief on the cross who turned to Jesus and simply said, "remember me when you come into your kingdom." (Luke 23:42) Jesus did and He remembers you, too.

Don't let your struggles to fill your Saint costume dissuade you. Instead, may those struggles lead you to see your hero more clearly. And rejoice in His promise, "today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43)

What struggles are you having with your life in Christ? What faults do you see in yourself? You don't need to pretend they aren't there or don't matter. Give them to Jesus.