

# Blessed Carlo Acutis: Biography and Classroom Activity Ideas

# Primary School (Years P-6)

"Young Saints: Carlo Acutis and the Power of Youth in Serving God"

## Objectives:

- Understand the life and virtues of Blessed Carlo Acutis.
- Recognise that age is not a barrier to serving God.
- Inspire students to make a difference in their communities.

## Carlo Acutis: A Life of Holiness in the Digital Age

### A Young Soul on Fire for God<sup>1 2</sup>

Bl. Carlo Acutis was born on May 3, 1991, in London to Italian parents. While he was young his family moved to Milan. From an early age, Carlo had a deep and abiding love for God—one that radiated through his life in ways that shaped not only his own journey but the faith of those around him. Despite coming from a family that wasn't particularly religious, Carlo's devotion sparked a renewal of faith in his parents. His heart was captivated by Jesus, and he lived with the conviction that holiness wasn't reserved for monks and mystics but was possible for everyone, even a tech-savvy teenager in the modern world.

Carlo balanced his love for technology with an even greater passion for the things of God. While many of his peers focused on social media and video games, Carlo saw technology as a tool for evangelism. He used his computer skills to share the faith, joining many who in recent times have used digital space as a place to proclaim the Gospel.

### Anchored in the Eucharist and Mary's Love<sup>3 4 5 6</sup>

For Carlo, the Eucharist wasn't just a symbol or a ritual—it was his "highway to heaven." From the age of seven, he attended daily Mass and spent time in Eucharistic adoration, meeting Christ in a profound and personal way. He understood what so many people forget: that the Eucharist is not an ancient idea but the reality of the presence of Jesus among us.

Hand in hand with his love for the Eucharist was his devotion to Mary. He prayed the Rosary daily, recognising Our Lady as a sure guide on the path to holiness. Carlo's simple yet

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.catholic.com/tract/the-life-of-carlo-acutis-biography-legacy-and-devotion>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/46048/who-was-carlo-acutis-a-cna-explainer>

<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Carlo-Acutis>

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.readability.com/carlo-acutis-the-millennial-saint-and-his-digital-mission>

<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/44813/venerable-carlo-acutis-and-his-love-for-the-eucharist>

<sup>6</sup> See <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2020/10/15/bl-carlo-acutis-the-example-young-people-need/>

profound spirituality reminds us that sainthood isn't about extraordinary feats—it's about extraordinary love poured into the ordinary moments of life.

## Using Technology to Point to the Divine<sup>7 8 9</sup>

Carlo's faith wasn't just personal; he was convinced it was meant to be shared. With a heart on fire for Jesus, he set out to document Eucharistic miracles from around the world, creating a website that became a powerful tool for evangelisation. His goal? To awaken in others the same awe and wonder he had for the Eucharist. His project grew into an exhibition that has touched countless lives across the globe, proving that even in an age of scepticism, the reality of Christ's presence continues to astonish and transform hearts.

## A Life Marked by Joy and Generosity<sup>10 11 12</sup>

Holiness, for Carlo, wasn't about sombre piety—it was about joy. He was known for his kindness, his laughter, and his ability to make others feel seen and valued. Whether helping classmates with their studies, serving at soup kitchens, or simply offering a smile, Carlo lived the Gospel through everyday acts of love. His joy wasn't superficial; it was rooted in his deep relationship with Jesus. He knew that real happiness doesn't come from wealth, status, or "success", but from living in communion with God.

## Sainthood in Sneakers<sup>13 14 15 16 17 18 19</sup>

Carlo's life left an undeniable mark on his family and community. His faithfulness led his parents back to the Church, and his witness continues to inspire young people worldwide. In a world that often tells us holiness is outdated or irrelevant, Carlo stands as proof that sanctity is possible here and now. He reminds us that we don't have to wait to be saints—we can begin today, in our own lives, with the tools at our disposal.

Carlo's journey took a poignant turn when he was diagnosed with acute promyelocytic leukaemia at the age of 15. Despite the severity of his illness, Carlo remained remarkably

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<sup>7</sup> See <https://aleteia.org/2021/10/12/bl-carlo-acutis-his-life-his-miracles-and-his-legacy>

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.carloacutis.com/en/association/mostra-miracoli-eucaristici>

<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/261981/pope-francis-carlo-acutis-shows-young-people-the-fullness-of-life-in-christ>

<sup>10</sup> See <https://belovedcatholic.com/blessed-carlo-acutis/>

<sup>11</sup> See [https://pilgrimcenterofhope.org/file\\_download/a521661c-5633-4168-9346-7ba13eb1b040](https://pilgrimcenterofhope.org/file_download/a521661c-5633-4168-9346-7ba13eb1b040)

<sup>12</sup> See <https://www.sadlier.com/religion/blog/blessed-carlo-acutis-a-life-story-to-inspire-young-disciples>

<sup>13</sup> See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/260581/carlo-acutis-and-pier-giorgio-frassati-to-be-canonized-in-2025-pope-francis-announces-dates>

<sup>14</sup> See <https://www.ncregister.com/cna/pope-francis-announces-2025-canonizations-for-carlo-acutis-pier-giorgio-frassati-during-jubilee-celebrations>

<sup>15</sup> See <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2024-07/consistory-cardinals-carlo-acutis-martyrs-canonization.html>

<sup>16</sup> See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/46238/blessed-carlo-acutis-doctors-recall-his-last-days-in-hospital>

<sup>17</sup> See <https://aleteia.org/2020/10/18/doctors-priest-remember-blessed-carlo-acutis-last-days>

<sup>18</sup> See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/262289/carlo-acutis-i-am-in-your-hands-catholic-pediatrician-recovers-from-cancer>

<sup>19</sup> See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/257826/carlo-acutis-what-did-he-die-of-and-where-is-he-buried>

composed. And while he accepted his condition decided not to let it dictate how he lived. Instead, he continued to live as a blessing in spite of his illness. His doctors and hospital chaplain recalled his serene acceptance and continued devotion, even in his final days. Carlo passed away on October 12, 2006, but his acceptance of his illness and unwavering faith left a profound impact on those around him.

Beatification and canonisation are distinct stages in the Catholic Church's process of recognising individuals as saints. Beatification requires one verified miracle attributed to the candidate's intercession, while canonisation requires a second verified miracle after beatification.

Carlo was beatified in 2020 for his deep devotion to the Eucharist and his innovative use of technology to evangelise. He also has had miracles attributed to his intercession. One notable miracle involved the healing of a young boy in Brazil who was suffering from a rare disease. Another miracle involved the healing of a young girl in Costa Rica who had suffered a severe head injury. These miracles, along with his exemplary life, have paved the way for his canonisation on April 27, 2025, highlighting his extraordinary faith and ability to inspire others.

Carlo's story is not just about the past—it's about the future. It's an invitation to young people, to all of us, to see faith not as a burden but as a great adventure. To let the Eucharist transform us. To use our gifts—whether in technology, art, service, or teaching—to bring others to Christ. To live with joy, knowing that heaven is not some distant reality but a presence breaking into our lives even now.

Carlo once said, "We are all born as originals, but many die as photocopies." He challenges us to live as originals, to embrace our unique call to holiness, and to walk the path to heaven, one step at a time, guided by love.

## Activity Ideas:

- **Art Projects:** Create drawings or crafts depicting Carlo's life and miracles; Create your own "Web Page" about your favourite Saint or devotional practice.
- **Prayer Sessions:** Organise group prayers and reflections inspired by Carlo's devotion.
- **Technology:** Have students create simple digital presentations or slideshows about Carlo Acutis using basic software. This can help them understand how Carlo used technology to spread his faith.
- **Eucharistic Adoration:** Arrange a visit to your Parish church or school chapel for a brief Eucharistic adoration session. Explain Carlo's love for the Eucharist and encourage students to spend a few moments in silent prayer. If appropriate, do this activity in conjunction with your APRE or Parish Priest.

- **Service Projects:** Use Carlo's acts of service as a way to generate interest in your current class or school service project. Discuss how Carlo helped others and how students can have influence in their community.
- **Saints Research:** Assign each student or groups of students a different saint to research and present to the class. This can help them see how Carlo is part of a larger tradition of saints who made a difference in the world.
- **Virtue Journals:** Have students keep a journal where they write about ways they can practice virtues like kindness, generosity, and faithfulness in their daily lives, inspired by Carlo's example. For younger students, talk about these values and have them write or draw ways that they do or could live these virtues out.
- **Interactive Timeline:** Create a large timeline of Carlo's life on the classroom wall. Have students add important events and milestones, along with pictures and drawings.
- **Faith and Technology Discussion:** Lead a discussion on how students can use technology positively, just like Carlo did. Encourage them to think of ways they can share their faith or help others using digital tools.
- **Miracle Stories:** Share stories of the miracles attributed to Carlo Acutis and discuss what miracles are. Have students write or draw their own "miracle" stories, imagining how they might help others through prayer.
- **Inspirational Quotes:** Display quotes attributed to Carlo around the classroom. Have students choose their favourite quote and create a poster or drawing that illustrates its meaning.
- **Music and Reflection:** Play reflective music and have a quiet time where students can think about Carlo's life and how they can follow his example. Encourage them to share their thoughts afterward.
- **Faith in Action:** Plan a "Faith in Action" day where students participate in various activities that reflect Carlo's virtues, such as helping clean the school grounds, writing thank-you notes to staff, or organising a small fundraiser for your school's chosen charity.

# Secondary School (Years 7-12)

"Ordinary People, Extraordinary Faith: The Life and Legacy of Carlo Acutis"

## Objectives:

- Explore the life and contributions of Blessed Carlo Acutis.
- Discuss the significance of youth in the Church.
- Encourage students to live out their faith actively.

## Carlo Acutis: A Digital Disciple in a Modern World<sup>20</sup>

Carlo Acutis was born on May 3, 1991, in London, England, to Italian parents Andrea Acutis and Antonia Salzano. Soon after, his family moved to Milan, where Carlo's life became a quiet but powerful witness to faith. Unlike many of us who inherit our religious convictions from family, Carlo was the one who led his parents deeper into their faith. From childhood, he had an innate sense that a life with God was the only life worth living.

Carlo wasn't just a devout Catholic—he was also a tech-savvy teenager and saw the internet not as a distraction but as a tool for evangelisation. In an era when screens often disconnect us from the sacred, Carlo used his skills in programming to document Eucharistic miracles, bridging the digital world with the divine.

## Suffering as an Offering<sup>21 22</sup>

At the age of 15, Carlo was diagnosed with acute promyelocytic leukaemia. It was a devastating diagnosis, but Carlo approached it with the same radical faith that shaped his entire life. He didn't retreat into bitterness or despair. Instead, he offered himself to God, the Pope, and the Church, and lived as fully devoted as he could through his illness.

In some ways, it became another way for him to live out his faith. Even in his final days, those around him saw a young man who had already found his home in God, unafraid to walk through the valley of death because he knew who was walking beside him.

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<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.catholic.com/tract/the-life-of-carlo-acutis-biography-legacy-and-devotion>

<sup>21</sup> See <https://aleteia.org/2021/10/12/bl-carlo-acutis-his-life-his-miracles-and-his-legacy>

<sup>22</sup> See <https://oracioncristiana.org/en/blessed-carlo-acutis/>

## The Eucharist: His "Highway to Heaven"<sup>23 24 25 26</sup>

For Carlo, the Eucharist was not a symbol or a routine—it was everything. He called it his "highway to heaven" and made it the centre of his daily life. From the age of seven, he attended daily Mass and spent time in Eucharistic adoration. He believed that the more we receive the Eucharist, the more we become like Jesus.

This wasn't just a private devotion. Carlo wanted the world to know the power of the Eucharist. To do so, he created a website cataloguing over 100 Eucharistic miracles from around the world—a digital pilgrimage for those unable to make one in person. His work continues to bring thousands closer to the real presence of Christ.

## A Joyful Witness<sup>27</sup>

Carlo lived the Gospel with a spirit of joy. He had a profound impact on his family and friends; his deep faith and devotion inspired his parents to return to the practice of their faith, and his example encouraged many others to deepen their own spiritual lives. He was kind, generous, and always willing to help others—whether it was a homeless person he met or a classmate struggling with schoolwork. His friends and family recall his infectious joy, a happiness that didn't depend on circumstances but on his relationship with Christ.

His love for the poor wasn't just theoretical. He volunteered at soup kitchens, gave his pocket money to those in need, and reminded those around him that "not me, but God" should be the centre of their lives. Carlo didn't just talk about faith; he lived it in a way that made others want to do the same.

## A Saint for the Digital Age<sup>28 29 30</sup>

Beatification and canonisation are distinct stages in the Catholic Church's process of recognising individuals as saints. Beatification requires one verified miracle attributed to the candidate's intercession, while canonisation requires a second verified miracle after beatification.

On October 10, 2020, Carlo Acutis was beatified in Assisi, a place he deeply loved because of St. Francis. The miracle attributed to his intercession was the healing of a young boy in Brazil suffering from a rare disease. Another miracle, the healing of a young girl in Costa Rica after her mother prayed at Carlo's tomb, has now paved the way for his upcoming canonisation on April 27, 2025.

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<sup>23</sup> See <https://www.readability.com/carlo-acutis-the-millennial-saint-and-his-digital-mission>

<sup>24</sup> See <https://wheelermethodist.org/religion/millennial-saint-carlo-acutis/>

<sup>25</sup> See <https://www.usccb.org/news/2024/pope-recognizes-miracle-needed-churchs-first-millennial-saint>

<sup>26</sup> See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/46048/who-was-carlo-acutis-a-cna-explainer>

<sup>27</sup> See <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2024-07/consistory-cardinals-carlo-acutis-martyrs-canonization.html>

<sup>28</sup> See <https://aleteia.org/2024/05/23/carlo-acutis-to-be-canonized-after-2nd-miracle-recognized>

<sup>29</sup> For a video on Canonisation inspired by Acutis' canonisation announcement, see the video and article <https://www.ewtnvatican.com/articles/ministry-of-saints-an-inside-look-on-the-process-of-sainthood-and-carlo-acutis-upcoming-canonization-4725>

<sup>30</sup> See <https://wheelermethodist.org/religion/carlo-acutis-canonization/>

Carlo's life reminds us that holiness isn't reserved for monks in cloisters or scholars in ivory towers. It's for the ordinary person—the student, the gamer, the tech enthusiast. He shows us that being plugged into God is far more important than being plugged into social media.

Carlo's journey took a poignant turn when he was diagnosed with leukaemia. Despite the severity of his illness, Carlo remained remarkably composed. His doctors and hospital chaplain recalled his calmness and continued devotion, even in his final days. Carlo passed away on October 12, 2006, but his acceptance of his illness and unwavering faith left a profound impact on those around him.

Carlo's story is not just about the past—it's about the future. It's an invitation to young people, to all of us, to see faith not as a burden but as a great adventure. To let the Eucharist transform us. To use our gifts—whether in technology, art, service, or teaching—to bring others to Christ. To live with joy, knowing that heaven is not some distant reality but a presence breaking into our lives even now.

Carlo once said, "We are all born as originals, but many die as photocopies." He challenges us to live as originals, to embrace our unique call to holiness, and to walk the path to heaven, one step at a time, guided by love.

## Living Like Carlo<sup>31</sup>

How do we live like Carlo?

- **Stay Close to the Eucharist:** Make Mass and adoration a priority.
- **Use Technology for Good:** Instead of letting it distract you, let it be a tool for deeper devotion and evangelisation.
- **Live with Joy:** Kindness and generosity aren't optional—they're the marks of a disciple.
- **Offer Your Suffering:** Life will bring struggles, but Carlo reminds us they can be transformed into something holy.

In saying, "All people are born as originals, but many die as photocopies", Carlo throws out a challenge to us. His life was a testament to what it means to live as an original—a life rooted in love for God and others. In a world that often prioritises likes, followers, and digital validation, Carlo offers us a different path: a life that points to heaven, one Eucharist at a time.

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<sup>31</sup> See <https://aleteia.org/2024/05/02/5-ways-carlo-acutis-is-an-essential-influence-for-todays-children>



## Activity Ideas:

- **Research Projects:** Investigate and present on different aspects of Carlo's life.
- **Debates and Discussions:** Engage in discussions and debates on the role of youth in the Church. Discuss Carlo's influence and how students can live out their faith in practical ways. How does Carlo's life after his diagnosis shape our thinking about how we might understand how we respond when "bad things happen to good people".
- **Service Projects:** Organise community service activities inspired by Carlo's example.
- **Digital Evangelisation:** Create websites or social media campaigns to share Carlo's story.
- **Documentary Viewing and Analysis:** Watch a documentary about Carlo Acutis and have students analyse his life, discussing key themes and lessons. Follow up with a reflective conversation or journalling (see below) on how his story affects their own faith journey.
- **Creative Writing:** Have students write a short story or poem inspired by Carlo's life and virtues. Encourage them to explore themes of faith, technology, and service.
- **Eucharistic Adoration and Reflection:** Organise a visit to the Parish church or school chapel for Eucharistic adoration. Provide students with reflection questions to consider during their time in prayer, focusing on Carlo's devotion to the Eucharist. Where appropriate, do this in partnership with your Parish Priest/Chaplain, APRE, or Campus Minister.
- **Technology and Faith Workshop:** Lead a discussion on the positive and negative impacts of technology on faith. Have students debate how they can use technology responsibly and effectively to evangelise. Conduct a workshop where students brainstorm and develop projects that use technology to spread their faith, inspired by Carlo's innovative use of digital tools. Create multimedia projects such as videos, podcasts, digital art, websites or social media campaigns that explore Carlo's life and message. Students can share these projects with the school community or online where appropriate.
- **Virtue Journals:** Encourage students to keep a journal where they reflect on how they can practice virtues like kindness, generosity, and faithfulness in their daily lives, inspired by Carlo's example.

- **Peer Mentoring:** Pair older students with younger ones to mentor them in their faith journey, sharing stories about Carlo Acutis and discussing how they can live out their faith in school and beyond.
- **Miracle Stories:** Research and present on the miracles attributed to Carlo Acutis. Discuss the significance of these miracles and what they reveal about faith and intercession.
- **Inspirational Quotes:** Display Carlo's quotes around the classroom. Have students choose their favourite quote and create a visual representation or presentation that illustrates its meaning and relevance to their lives.
- **Music and Reflection:** Play reflective music and have a quiet time where students can think about Carlo's life and how they can follow his example. Encourage them to share their thoughts afterward.
- **Faith in Action Day:** Plan a "Faith in Action" day where students take part in various activities that reflect Carlo's virtues, such as helping clean the school grounds, writing thank-you notes to staff, or organising a small fundraiser for your school's chosen charity.

