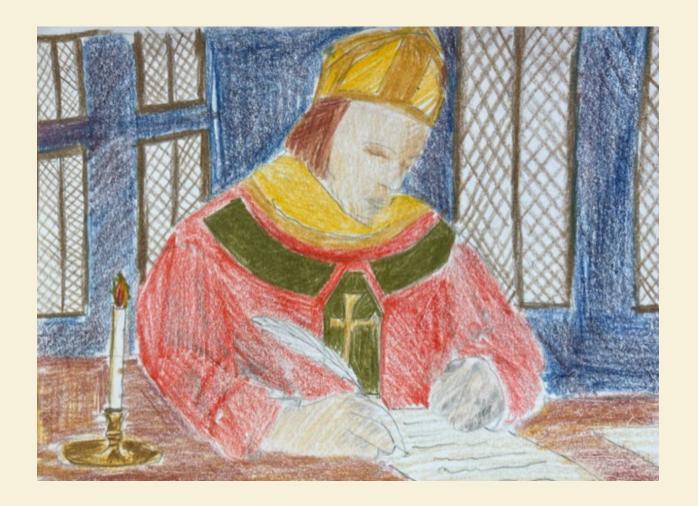# Saint Thomas Becket

by Margot Mohan

Saint Thomas Becket was born in 1118 to a London merchant. He loved fine clothes and parties but could not have them because he was poor.
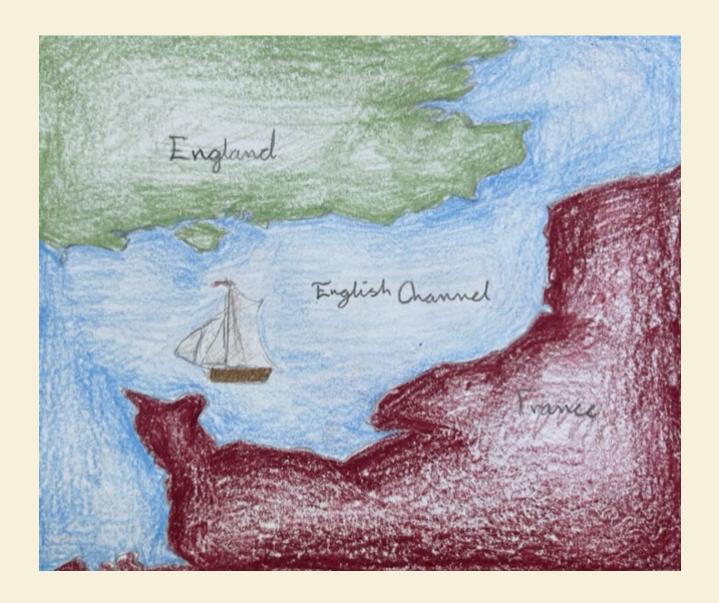
When he got older, he became friends with the King, Henry II. King Henry decided to make Thomas Becket the Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest Church position in the country, thinking he could get Becket to do what he wanted. After he became Archbishop, Thomas Becket changed. He became more serious and focused more on God than pleasure. Now King Henry got mad at Becket and they fought because Becket would not do what the King wanted.

After a long time, Becket agreed to do what the King wanted, but he soon felt bad and wrote a letter to the Pope asking him to forgive him. This made the King mad again and he had all the bishops of England come together to judge Becket. Becket did not think this was right because the bishops were under him and had no right to judge him.

So during the night, Thomas Becket decided to leave England and go to France. The King of France didn't like the King of England, so he was happy to keep Becket safe.
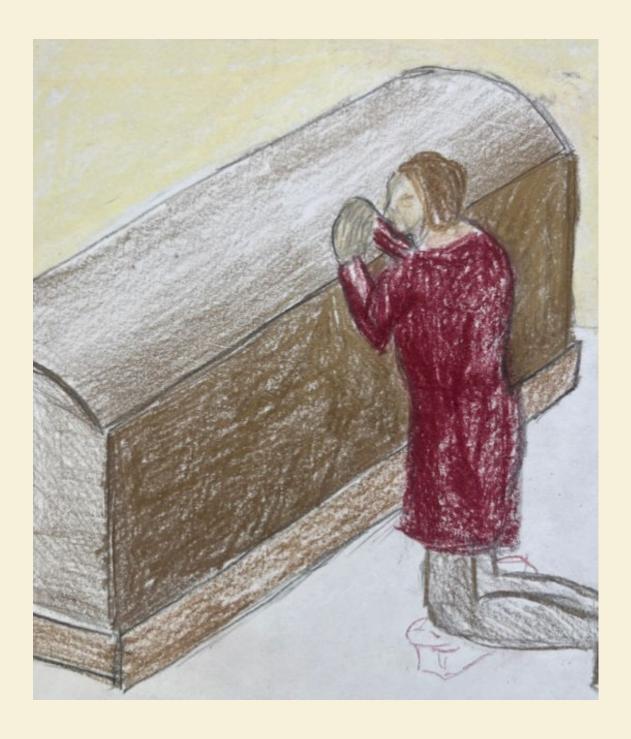
Becket stayed in France for six years, then Henry II forgave him and asked him to return to England. Thomas Becket came back as Archbishop of Canterbury. The first thing he did was punish all the priests and bishops who had gone against the Church.
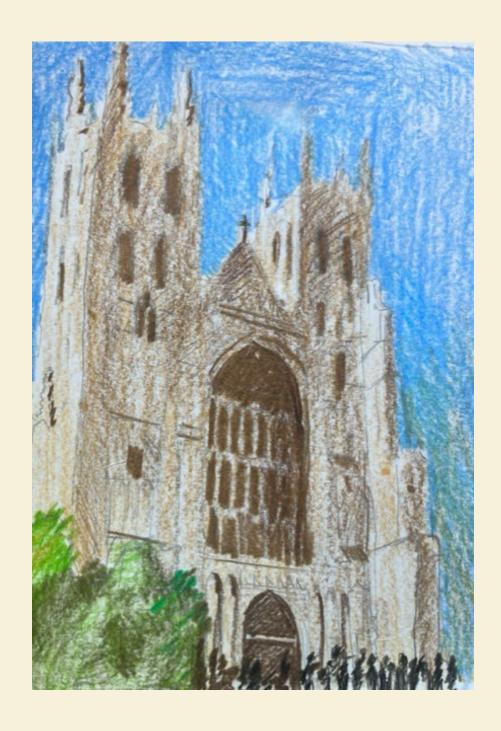
This made King Henry very mad and in his anger he asked four of his knights to kill Thomas Becket. The King did not mean this and only said this because he was angry, but the knights did not like Becket and went off to kill him.

First the knights went to Becket's house, but his friends had told him to go to the Cathedral to prevent the bad knights from catching him. The knights followed Becket into the church and tried to take him outside, but he would not move and so they killed him on the choir steps.

When King Henry heard about what had happened, he was very sorry and punished the knights who had killed Thomas Becket. King Henry prayed to God to forgive him, then he went to the place where Becket was buried and prayed to him.

Becket was killed in 1170 and three years later he was canonized as a saint. His feast day is December 29th. Even today, thousands of pilgrims still visit his shrine each year. Saint Thomas Becket, pray for us.