Saint Youngmen

by Hikaru Nakamura · Language: EN

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Overview

Saint Young Men (Saint Oniisan) is a unique slice-of-life comedy manga by Hikaru Nakamura, chronicling the earthly vacation of Jesus Christ and Gautama Buddha in a modest apartment in Tachikawa, Tokyo. Having successfully guided humanity for millennia, the two divine figures decide to take a break from their heavenly duties to experience modern life. The series humorously explores their attempts to blend in with contemporary Japanese society, often leading to comical misunderstandings and accidental displays of their divine powers.

The narrative is episodic, focusing on their everyday adventures, from budgeting for rent and groceries to navigating public transportation, using smartphones, and visiting local attractions like amusement parks and public baths. Much of the humor stems from their distinct personalities – Jesus, the more excitable and prone to accidental miracles, and Buddha, the calmer, more introspective figure who often radiates enlightenment – as they react to the mundane aspects of human existence. The manga gently satirizes religious iconography and teachings while maintaining a respectful and endearing portrayal of its protagonists, making it a charming and thought-provoking exploration of friendship, cultural differences, and finding the sacred in the ordinary.

Key Takeaways

- Embrace the humor in everyday situations, as even divine beings find joy and confusion in the mundane.
- Recognize that true friendship can bridge vast differences in background, even between religious founders.
- Approach new cultures and technologies with an open mind, as adapting to change is a continuous journey.
- Find moments of peace and enlightenment amidst the chaos of modern life, much like Buddha's calm demeanor.
- Understand that even figures of immense importance can appreciate simple pleasures like a good meal or a quiet afternoon.
- Be mindful of how your actions, even accidental ones, can impact those around you.
- Appreciate the beauty of diverse perspectives, as Jesus and Buddha often learn from each other's unique viewpoints.

Chapter Summaries

Chapters 1-3: The Holy Roommates' Earthly Vacation

Introduces Jesus and Buddha, two major religious figures, living incognito as roommates in a modest apartment in Tachikawa, Tokyo, while on a vacation from heaven. They attempt to live like ordinary humans, but their divine powers and saintly auras often manifest accidentally, leading to humorous misunderstandings. Buddha is depicted as frugal and calm, often concerned with saving money, while Jesus is more excitable and prone to modern trends like blogging and making puns. Their initial struggles with human technology and customs are highlighted, such as Jesus's difficulty with a rice cooker or Buddha's surprise at the cost of everyday items. They navigate their new environment, often causing unintentional blessings or minor miracles for unsuspecting locals, establishing the core comedic premise of their earthly sabbatical.

Chapters 4-7: Daily Life and Accidental Miracles

Focuses on Jesus and Buddha's everyday routines in Tachikawa, such as shopping at convenience stores, visiting public baths, and trying to understand human entertainment. Buddha's deep compassion for all living beings often leads to animals, particularly stray cats, following him, while Jesus's stigmata or halo can appear when he's stressed, excited, or performs a good deed, causing minor miracles or blessings for those around them. They navigate situations like dealing with noisy neighbors, trying to save money on groceries, or simply enjoying a quiet day, often with their divine nature inadvertently complicating simple human tasks and interactions.

Chapters 8-11: Exploring Modern Japan

The saints venture further into modern Japanese culture and attractions. They visit an amusement park, where Jesus's overwhelming excitement causes a 'miracle' on a roller coaster, and Buddha struggles with the concept of paying for fun, preferring free activities. They also experience events like a summer festival, trying to blend in with the crowds while their divine presence occasionally causes people to feel unusually blessed or calm. Their attempts to understand human slang, pop culture references, and social trends often lead to comedic misinterpretations, highlighting their unique perspectives as ancient deities.

Chapters 12-15: Heavenly Visitors and Earthly Concerns

Other heavenly beings, such as the Archangels Michael and Gabriel, or Buddha's disciples, occasionally visit the apartment, often to check on the saints or to experience Earth themselves. These visits usually result in more chaos and misunderstandings, as the visitors also struggle with human customs and technology, sometimes even causing larger-scale divine interventions. The saints also deal with more mundane human concerns like apartment maintenance, dealing with their landlord, or trying to find part-time jobs, which their divine nature and lack of human experience make difficult and often humorous.

Chapters 16-19: The Saints and Children

Explores Jesus and Buddha's interactions with local children in their neighborhood. Buddha's calm demeanor, gentle nature, and love for animals make him particularly popular with kids, who often mistake his enlightenment aura for a friendly glow. Jesus's playful nature, love for puns, and ability to perform minor 'magic tricks' (unintentional miracles like turning water into juice) also endears him to them. These interactions often highlight their innocence and purity, contrasting with their attempts to appear normal, as they help children with school projects or participate in local community events, often with humorous divine interventions.

Chapters 20-23: Seasonal Events and Spiritual Reflections

The saints experience various seasonal events in Japan, such as Christmas (which Jesus finds particularly amusing, given his role), New Year's celebrations, and cherry blossom viewing. These events often prompt them to reflect on their past lives, their spiritual teachings, or the meaning of human traditions, leading to moments of gentle introspection mixed with their usual comedic misunderstandings. They might try to participate in local customs like visiting a shrine or enjoying seasonal foods, often with their divine powers subtly influencing the outcome or causing unexpected blessings for those around them.

Chapters 24-27: Technology and Pop Culture

Jesus and Buddha continue their attempts to understand modern technology and pop culture. Jesus becomes increasingly interested in blogging and social media, trying to document his earthly experiences and share his thoughts, often with humorous results due to his lack of understanding of internet etiquette or trending topics. Buddha, while more reserved, might get drawn into video games or other forms of entertainment, often applying his philosophical wisdom to mundane situations, much to Jesus's amusement. Their interactions with smartphones, computers, and television provide many comedic moments as they try to adapt to the digital age.

Chapters 28-31: Health and Wellness

The saints encounter human concepts of health and wellness. They might visit a gym, try out new diets, or deal with minor ailments, often with their divine bodies reacting in unexpected ways (e.g., Jesus's stigmata appearing during a strenuous workout or Buddha's enlightenment aura intensifying during meditation). Buddha's focus on inner peace and meditation often contrasts with Jesus's more active and sometimes clumsy attempts at physical fitness or trying new health fads. These chapters explore their unique perspectives on physical and spiritual well-being in a modern human context, leading to many humorous situations.

Chapters 32-35: Food and Frugality

Explores the saints' relationship with food and Buddha's persistent frugality. They try various Japanese dishes, often with Jesus being more adventurous and eager to try new flavors, while

Buddha is more cautious about spending money and prefers simple, economical meals. Buddha's attempts to save money often lead to humorous situations, such as him trying to find the cheapest ingredients, making elaborate meals from simple items, or being overly concerned about food waste. Their divine nature sometimes influences their eating habits or reactions to certain foods, adding another layer of comedy to their daily lives.

Chapters 36-39: The Meaning of Vacation

The saints reflect on the true meaning of their earthly vacation. While they genuinely enjoy their time experiencing human life, they sometimes ponder their responsibilities, their past lives, and the ultimate purpose of their stay on Earth. These chapters often feature more philosophical discussions between them, interspersed with their usual comedic antics as they try to balance their divine duties with their desire to experience human life fully. They might encounter situations that challenge their understanding of humanity or their own teachings, leading to both humorous and gently insightful moments about their spiritual journey.

Themes

- Friendship
- Cultural differences
- Modernity vs. tradition
- Humor in the mundane
- Religious understanding

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Saint Youngmen about?

Saint Young Men is a comedy manga about Jesus Christ and Gautama Buddha taking a vacation on Earth, specifically in a Tokyo apartment. They attempt to live as normal humans, navigating modern Japanese society, budgeting, and dealing with everyday life, often leading to humorous situations due to their divine natures.

Is Saint Youngmen worth reading?

Yes, if you enjoy gentle, slice-of-life comedy with a unique premise. It's praised for its respectful yet humorous portrayal of religious figures, its charming characters, and its insightful observations on modern culture. It's a lighthearted and often heartwarming read.

How does Saint Youngmen end?

Spoiler: Saint Young Men is an ongoing manga series, so it does not have a definitive ending yet. The story continues with episodic adventures of Jesus and Buddha in Tokyo, exploring new aspects of modern life and their friendship. The anime film and OVA adaptations cover specific

arcs from the manga.

Who should read Saint Youngmen?

This manga is ideal for readers who appreciate slice-of-life comedy, cultural commentary, and stories about friendship. It's also suitable for those open to a lighthearted, respectful, and humorous take on religious figures, offering a fresh perspective on spirituality and everyday life.

How long does it take to read Saint Youngmen?

As an ongoing manga series with over 20 volumes, reading the entire published collection would take a significant amount of time, likely over 15-20 hours. A single volume can typically be read in about 45-60 minutes, depending on reading speed.

Best Quotes

“It's a miracle!”

This line is frequently exclaimed by Jesus, often in response to mundane or slightly fortunate events in modern Tokyo, highlighting his excitable and easily impressed nature. It's a running gag that underscores his divine power being applied to everyday occurrences.

“You're too much of a saint, Jesus.”

Buddha often says this to Jesus, usually when Jesus's inherent saintliness or divine powers inadvertently cause a commotion or draw unwanted attention. It reflects Buddha's more grounded and pragmatic approach to blending into human society.

“I just wanted to buy some new sandals.”

This is a recurring thought or statement from Jesus, expressing his simple, human desires amidst the often-overwhelming modern world. It contrasts his divine status with his very relatable, everyday wants, often leading to humorous situations.

“I'm worried about my disciples.”

Both Jesus and Buddha express this sentiment at different times, reflecting their enduring concern for their followers, even as they enjoy a sabbatical. It shows their paternal care and occasional anxiety about how their teachings are being interpreted.

“This is a good deal.”

Buddha frequently utters this line, showcasing his frugal nature and enjoyment of finding bargains, particularly at supermarkets or discount stores. It's a key aspect of his character, contrasting with Jesus's more impulsive spending habits.

“I'm going to try to understand human suffering.”

Buddha says this with earnestness, often leading him into situations where he experiences minor modern inconveniences or misunderstandings, rather than profound suffering. It highlights his core mission in a humorous, slice-of-life context.

“I'm going to try to understand human joy.”

Jesus often expresses this desire, leading him to enthusiastically embrace modern entertainment, pop culture, and simple pleasures. It emphasizes his joyful and curious personality, eager to connect with contemporary human experiences.

“It's a good thing we're not famous anymore.”

This thought or statement is shared by both protagonists, acknowledging the relief of living a relatively normal, anonymous life in Tokyo. It allows them to experience everyday human existence without the constant pressure of their divine celebrity.

“I'm just a normal guy.”

Both Jesus and Buddha frequently try to convince themselves and others of this, despite their divine origins and occasional accidental displays of power. It's central to their attempt to blend in and enjoy their sabbatical as ordinary humans.

“Oh, my head is glowing again.”

Buddha occasionally makes this observation, referring to his halo which sometimes appears when he's particularly enlightened or experiencing a moment of profound understanding. It's a visual gag that subtly reminds readers of his true identity.

“My stigmata are acting up.”

Jesus sometimes mentions this, usually when he's stressed or experiencing strong emotions, leading to his stigmata bleeding. It's a humorous and slightly inconvenient reminder of his divine nature in mundane situations.

“I need to update my blog.”

Jesus often says this, highlighting his embrace of modern technology and his hobby of blogging about his daily life and observations. It's a charming detail that grounds his divine character in contemporary culture.

“This is a good place for meditation.”

Buddha often seeks out quiet, unassuming spots in Tokyo, like a park bench or a corner of their apartment, for meditation. This line underscores his consistent spiritual practice amidst the bustling city life.

“I'm going to watch that movie again.”

Jesus frequently expresses his enthusiasm for movies, often rewatching his favorites. This line showcases his love for modern entertainment and his childlike joy in simple pleasures, contrasting with his divine responsibilities.

Questions & Answers

What is the premise of 'Saint Youngmen'?

'Saint Youngmen' follows Jesus Christ and Gautama Buddha, who decide to take a sabbatical on Earth and rent an apartment in modern-day Tachikawa, Tokyo. The manga humorously depicts their daily lives as they try to understand and adapt to contemporary Japanese culture, often leading to comedic misunderstandings and accidental displays of their divine powers while attempting to live as ordinary humans.

How do Jesus and Buddha adapt to modern life in Tokyo?

Jesus and Buddha attempt to blend in by adopting human customs and hobbies. Jesus embraces blogging, pop culture, and movies, often getting overly excited about mundane things. Buddha, more reserved, enjoys bargain hunting, meditation, and observing human behavior. They navigate challenges like understanding technology, managing finances, and avoiding recognition, all while trying to maintain their 'normal guy' facade.

What are some of Jesus's defining personality traits in the manga?

Jesus is portrayed as excitable, easily impressed, and somewhat naive about modern life. He's enthusiastic about new experiences, loves blogging and movies, and often inadvertently performs miracles when stressed or emotional. He is kind-hearted, prone to overreacting, and deeply concerned for his followers, often expressing a desire to understand human joy.

What are some of Buddha's defining personality traits in the manga?

Buddha is depicted as calm, rational, and frugal. He enjoys finding bargains, meditating, and observing the world with a detached wisdom, though he can be surprisingly competitive. He often acts as the more grounded counterpart to Jesus's exuberance, occasionally exasperated by his friend's antics, and is committed to understanding human suffering.

What kind of humor is prevalent in 'Saint Youngmen'?

The manga's humor is gentle, observational, and character-driven. It stems from the juxtaposition of divine beings experiencing mundane modern life, their different personalities, and their often-accidental use of powers. The comedy is rarely mean-spirited, relying on situational irony, cultural misunderstandings, and the endearing innocence of the protagonists.

Do Jesus and Buddha perform miracles in modern Tokyo?

Yes, but usually accidentally or for mundane reasons. Jesus might inadvertently turn water into wine when stressed, or cause stigmata to bleed when emotional. Buddha's halo might glow when he's particularly enlightened, or animals might gather around him. These occurrences are often played for comedic effect, highlighting their struggle to live 'normal' lives.

What is the significance of the apartment they live in?

The apartment in Tachikawa serves as their humble sanctuary and a symbol of their attempt to live ordinary human lives. It's a simple, unassuming space that grounds their divine existence in the everyday. It's where they share meals, discuss modern culture, and navigate the challenges of cohabitation, emphasizing their desire for a normal sabbatical.

How do Jesus and Buddha interact with their landlady?

Their landlady is a kind, elderly woman who is completely oblivious to their true identities. She views them as polite, if slightly eccentric, young men. Their interactions are often humorous, as she misinterprets their divine quirks as personality traits, and they try their best to maintain their cover, often with amusing results.

What challenges do they face living together?

Despite their friendship, Jesus and Buddha face challenges due to their differing personalities and divine habits. Jesus's excitability and tendency to accidentally perform miracles contrast with Buddha's calm frugality and desire for quiet. They often bicker over household chores, finances, and how to best enjoy modern life, much like any ordinary roommates.

What is the overall message or theme of 'Saint Youngmen'?

The manga's overall message is one of understanding, acceptance, and finding the sacred in the mundane. It gently explores themes of friendship, cultural adaptation, and the universal human experience, regardless of one's background. It suggests that even divine beings can find joy and meaning in simple, everyday life, promoting interfaith harmony through humor.

What is the role of their disciples in the story?

Their disciples occasionally appear, either in flashbacks or as concerned celestial beings observing their masters from afar. They sometimes visit Earth, leading to humorous situations where Jesus and Buddha try to hide their modern lifestyle or explain their actions. The disciples' appearances highlight the protagonists' ongoing connection to their past roles and responsibilities.

How do Jesus and Buddha handle their past fame?

Jesus and Buddha actively try to avoid recognition and downplay their past fame. They prefer to live anonymously, enjoying the freedom from constant adoration and scrutiny. They often get nervous when people seem to recognize them or when their divine powers inadvertently draw attention, as they wish to maintain their 'normal guy' facade.

What modern technologies do they encounter and how do they react?

They encounter various modern technologies. Jesus enthusiastically embraces blogging, the internet, and movies, often getting overly excited. Buddha is more cautious but appreciates the convenience of things like discount apps and air conditioning. Their reactions range from childlike wonder to humorous confusion, highlighting their journey of adapting to the 21st century.

What is Jesus's favorite pastime in modern Tokyo?

Jesus's favorite pastime in modern Tokyo is blogging about his daily life and observations, as well as watching movies. He is a big fan of cinema, often rewatching his favorites and getting deeply invested in the plots. These hobbies allow him to express his creativity and immerse himself in contemporary human culture.

What is Buddha's favorite pastime in modern Tokyo?

Buddha's favorite pastime in modern Tokyo is bargain hunting, particularly at supermarkets and discount stores, and meditation. He finds joy in frugality and the challenge of finding the best deals. He also regularly seeks out quiet spots for meditation, maintaining his spiritual practice amidst the bustling city life.

Spoiler: What happens at the end of the manga?

Spoiler: 'Saint Youngmen' is an ongoing manga series, so there isn't a definitive 'ending' yet. Jesus and Buddha continue their sabbatical in Tachikawa, experiencing new aspects of modern life, encountering various human and celestial characters, and navigating their unique friendship. The series maintains its slice-of-life, comedic tone, focusing on their ongoing journey of understanding humanity.