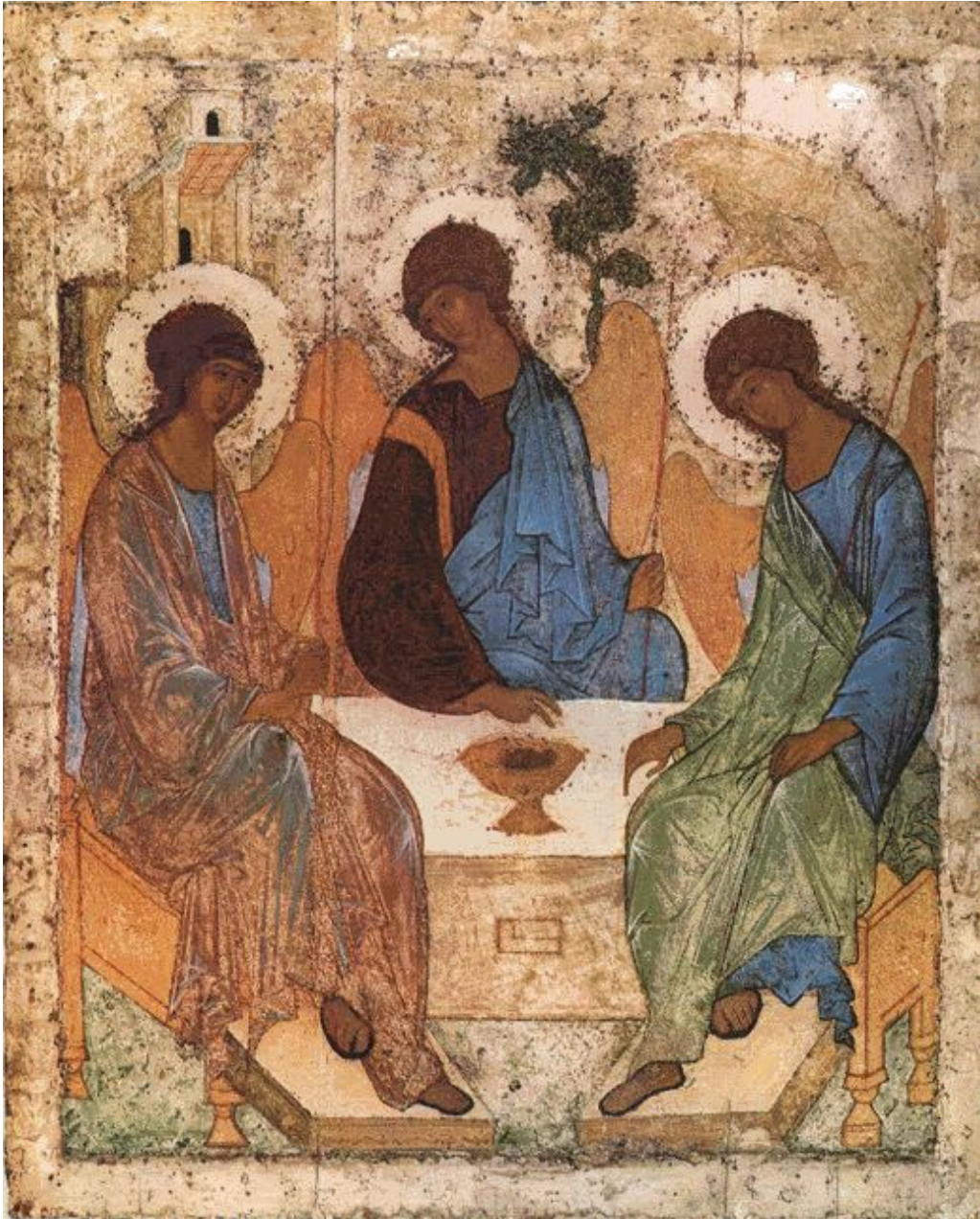


Religious Art of Saint Joseph Church

The Holy Trinity Of the Old Testament



By Andrei Rublev

(1260–1430)

The icon of the Trinity was painted around 1410 by Andrei Rublev

It depicts the three angels who visited Abraham at the Oak of Mamre - but is often interpreted as an icon of the Trinity.

It is sometimes called the icon of the Old Testament Trinity.

The image is full of symbolism - designed to take the viewer into the Mystery of the Trinity.

Behind the figure is a tree. This could be the oak tree at Mamre under which the three angelic visitors rested. The hospitality of Abraham and Sarah was rewarded in the gift of a son.

What does this tell us of the importance of hospitality?

The tree may also represent the Cross - the tree on which our Saviour died. The tree of death which becomes the tree of eternal life - lost to humanity by the disobedience of Adam and Eve - restored to us by the obedience of Jesus.

Reflect on the paradox of the Cross - the place where death and life confront each other - where death gives way to resurrection - and eternal life.

It may also be the tree of life in Revelation bearing twelve kinds of fruit one for each month of the year and the leaves of this tree are for the healing of the nations...

What is the promise here - waiting to be fulfilled?

The Christ figure in turn inclines towards the figure on the left - and we are drawn to gaze there too.

Some general thoughts to get you started...

The three faces are identical... how might this help us to understand the nature of the Trinity?

The figures can be enclosed in a circle



What might this tell us about the life of the Trinity?

All the figures wear a blue garment - the color of the heavens...

but each wears something that speaks of Their own identity



A figure at rest within Itself.

The blue garment almost hidden by a shimmering - ethereal robe.

- The Father -

The One who is Creator who cannot be seen by His human creatures.

Both hands clasp the staff. All authority in heaven and on earth belong to the Father.

What kind of authority do you find in the figure in the icon?

Behind the figure is a house the dwelling place of God. "In my Father's House are many mansions - I go to prepare a place for you..."

What is the promise for you in these words of Jesus?

"Those who love Me will keep My word and My Father will love them - and we will come to them and make our home with them".

What is Jesus promising here?



The figure wears the blue of divinity.

The brown garment speaks of the earth - of His humanity.

The gold stripe speaks of kingship.

- The Christ -

Reflect on the form of kingship being represented here...

The Christ figure rests two fingers on the table - laying onto it His divine and His human nature.

He points to a cup filled with wine...
What does this represent?

Behind the figure is a tree.

This could be the oak tree at Mamre under which the three angelic visitors rested.

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- A blue robe speaking of divinity -
- A green robe representing new life -

- *The Spirit* -

If you can, spend time gazing at the newly unfurled leaves against a blue sky.
(If the season is not appropriate - live on the memory!)

Reflect on the link between what you see and the figure in the icon.

The Spirit touches the table - earthing the divine life of God.

Reflect on that touch and the words of invocation: "Lord, You are holy indeed,
the fountain of all holiness. Let Your Spirit come upon these gifts to make them
holy...."

Reflect on that touch and its meaning for the life of the world...

Behind the figure is a mountain. Mountains are places where people often
encountered God - places where heaven and earth seem to touch. Moses met
God on mountains. Jesus was transfigured whilst in prayer on a mountain.

Reflect on your own "mountain top" experiences - times when you have felt very close to God - when you have felt transfigured and filled with the Spirit. (These need not necessarily have taken place on mountain tops!)

Elijah could not find God in the earthquake - the wind - the fire on the mountain - but in the gentle breeze which carried the voice of God deep into his being.

When have you been aware of the presence of the dynamic stillness which is the Spirit within you?

The Spirit inclines - drawing our gaze to the central figure - representing Christ.

The Icon of the Holy Trinity.

In the medieval Russia, all newly-painted icons were coated with a layer of a special drying oil to protect the painting against mechanical damage and impart greater intensity to the colors. Unfortunately, with time oil darkened, thereby darkening the initial colors of icons and eventually turning absolutely black. For this reason, the icon had to be renewed, and the *Trinity* was painted over with fresh paints within its faintly discernible contours. This procedure was repeated several times. Towards the turn of the twentieth century there remained nothing of Rublev's masterpiece apart from the rapturous recollections of antiquity. The first attempt to remove later accretions from the fifteenth-century icon was made in 1905. At the end of 1918 restoration work was continued, the surround was removed and it is only since then that the icon's appearance has become close to the original. We say "close to" because in these long five centuries the icon's painting turned out to be damaged: the gold background was lost, the tree was painted anew within the old contours, the top layers of paint were washed off, even the ground was occasionally disturbed and cracks appeared, the outlines of the Angels' heads were partly altered. All this notwithstanding, even in its present state the *Trinity* remains one of the best extant Russian icons.

The subject of the icon is based on the Biblical story about the visit by three Angels to the Prophet Abraham and his wife Sarah. According to the theological interpretations whose authors associated the Old Testament events with events of the New Testament, these Angels were the three Persons of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit. Though revealing direct iconographic affinity with this kind of representations, the *Trinity* as painted by Rublev, has its own features which carry a new quality and a new content. In Rublev's icon we observe for the first time all the three Angels shown equal. This icon alone conformed to the strict rules of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.

Meantime, some historians of art believe that Rublev expressed in the icon the need for and benefit of love, of a union based on the trust of one individual in another. Whereas Rublev's *Trinity* is void of any noticeable energy of earthly life, of corporeality of forms and external manifestations of love, equally absent from it is that cold soaring of the spirit, so remote from humans. The image determines the subtle struck balance between soul and spirit, the corporeal and the imponderable, endless and immortal sojourn in the heavens. When speaking of Rublev's work, different authors describe the Trinity's Angels as quiet, gentle, anxious, sorrowful, and the mood permeating the icon as detached, meditative, contemplative, intimate.

Depicting the Trinity as an indivisible essence without beginning and without end, infinite and eternal, Rublev chose repetitive light and airy movement as the leitmotif of the composition. The Angels' attitudes and meaningful gestures, their inclinations are amazing in their dissimilarity while being almost identical, so that the icon leaves the clear impression of a seemingly many-voice talk.

It is not fortuitous that we perceive Andrei Rublev's *Trinity* as the highest achievement of Russian art. Crowning a long artistic career of a single master, it is also an embodiment of the creative thought of several generations. Just as any other medieval artist, Rublev highly valued tradition and collective effort. All the best features of early fifteenth-century Russian culture merged in the *Trinity*: a form of philosophical generalization, outwardly abstract, but with an amazingly concrete content, a capacity to express through iconographic images the national character, and artistic skills attaining to the pinnacles of world art.

Many scholars consider Rublev's *Trinity* the most perfect of all Russian icons and perhaps the most perfect of all the icons ever painted. The work was created for the abbot of the Trinity Monastery, Nikon of Radonezh, a disciple of the famous Sergius, one of the leaders of the monastic revival in the 14th-century Russia. Asking Rublev to paint the icon of the Holy Trinity, Nikon wanted to commemorate Sergius as a man whose life and deeds embodied the most progressive processes in the late 14th-century Russia.

From the earliest times, the idea of the Trinity was controversial and difficult to understand, especially for the uneducated masses. Even though Christianity replaced the pagan polytheism, it gave the believers a monotheistic religion with a difficult concept of one God in three hypostases -- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Not only the uneducated population but many theologians had difficulties with the concept of the triune God; from time to time, a heretical movement, like Arianism, questioned the doctrine, causing long debates, violent persecutions, and even greater general confusion. Trying to portray the Trinity, but always aware of the Biblical prohibition against depicting God, icon painters turned to the story of the hospitality of Abraham who was visited by three wanderers. In their compositions, icon painters included many details -- the figures of Abraham and Sarah, a servant killing a calf in preparation

for the feast, the rock, the tree of Mamre, and the house (tent) -- trying to render as faithfully as possible the events described in the text:

"And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf that he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat" (KJV, Genesis, 18: 1-8 and passim).

Very few artists before Rublev dared to eliminate all the narrative elements from the story, leaving only the three angels; usually those who did so had to deal with limited space. The results of their efforts did not find general acceptance or many copyists. Rublev was the first to make a conscious decision not to include in his composition the figures of Abraham and Sarah because he did not set out to illustrate the story of the hospitality of Abraham, as did many painters before him, but to convey through his image the idea of the unity and indivisibility of the three persons of the Trinity.

The doctrine of the Trinity, difficult to explain logically, found various interpretations. Some thought that the Trinity consisted of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Others believed that it was just God and two angels. In the 14th and 15th-century Russia, in the period of many heretical movements, the idea of the Trinity was often questioned. The heretics in Novgorod claimed that it is not permissible to paint the Trinity on icons because Abraham did not see the Trinity but only God and two angels. Other heretics rejected the idea of the three hypostases of God altogether. The church fought the heresies with all the means it had -- usually with polemical treatises, but also with force, if necessary. Russian icon painters before Rublev subscribed to the same point of view that Abraham was visited by God (in Christ's image) and two angels. Hence, Christ was represented in icons of the Trinity as the middle angel and was symbolically set apart either by a halo with a cross, by a considerable enlargement of his figure, by widely spread wings or by a scroll in His hand.

Explanation of the meaning on the Trinity Icon.

This icon takes as its subject the mysterious story where Abraham receives three visitors as he camps by the oak of Mamre. He serves them a meal. As the conversation progresses he seems to be talking straight to God, as if these 'angels' were in some way a metaphor for the three persons of the Trinity. In Rublev's representation of the scene, the three gold-winged figures are seated around a white table on which a golden, chalice-like bowl contains a roasted lamb. In the background of the picture, a house can be seen at the top left and a tree in the centre. Less distinctly, a rocky hill lies in the upper right corner. The composition is a great circle around the table, focussing the attention on the chalice-bowl at the centre, which reminds the viewer inescapably of an altar at Communion.

On one level this picture shows three angels seated under Abraham's tree, but on another it is a visual expression of what the Trinity means, what is the nature of God, and how we approach him. Reading the picture from left to right, we see the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Colors

Rublev gives each person of the Trinity different clothing. On the right, the Holy Spirit has a garment of the clear blue of the sky, wrapped over with a robe of a fragile green. So the Spirit of creation moves in sky and water, breathes in heaven and earth. All living things owe their freshness to his touch.

The Son has the deepest colors; a thick heavy garment of the reddish-brown of earth and a cloak of the blue of heaven. In his person he unites heaven and earth, the two natures are present in him, and over his right shoulder (the Government shall be upon his shoulder) there is a band of gold shot through the earthly garment, as his divinity suffuses and transfigures his earthly being.

The Father seems to wear all the colors in a kind of fabric that changes with the light, that seems transparent, that cannot be described or confined in words. And this is how it should be. No one has seen the Father, but the vision of him fills the universe.

The wings of the angels or persons are gold. Their seats are gold. The chalice in the centre is gold, and the roof of the house. Whether they sit, whether they fly, all is perfect, precious, and worthy. In stasis, when there is no activity apparent on the part of God, his way is golden. When he flies, blazes with power and unstoppable strength, his way is golden. And in the Sacrifice at the centre of all things, his way is golden.

The light that shines around their heads is white, pure light. Gold is not enough to express the glory of God. Only light will do, and that same white becomes the

holy table, the place of offering. God is revealed and disclosed here, at the heart, in the whiteness of untouchable light.

The Father looks forward, raising his hand in blessing to the Son. It is impossible to tell whether he looks up at the Son or down to the chalice on the table, but his gesture expresses a movement towards the Son. This is my Son, listen to him... The hand of the Son points on, around the circle, to the Spirit. In this simple array we see the movement of life towards us, The Father sends the Son, the Son sends the Spirit. The life flows clockwise around the circle. And we complete the circle. As the Father sends the Son, as the Son sends the Holy Spirit, so we are invited and sent to complete the circle of the Godhead with our response. And we respond to the movement of the Spirit who points us to Jesus. And he shows us the Father in whom all things come to fruition. This is the counter-clockwise movement of our lives, in response to the movement of God. And along the way are the three signs at the top of the picture, the hill, the tree, and the house.

The Spirit touches us, even though we do not know who it is that is touching us. He leads us by ways we may not be aware of, up the hill of prayer. It may be steep and rocky, but the journeying God goes before us along the path. It leads to Jesus, the Son of God, and it leads to a tree. A great tree in the heat of the day spreads its shade. It is a place of security, a place of peace, a place where we begin to find out the possibilities of who we can be. It is no ordinary tree. It stands above the Son in the picture, and stands above the altar-table where the lamb lies within the chalice. Because of the sacrifice this tree grows. The tree of death has been transformed into a tree of life for us.

The tree is on the way to the house. Over the head of the Father is the house of the Father. It is the goal of our journey. It is the beginning and end of our lives. Its roof is golden. Its door is always open for the traveller. It has a tower, and its window is always open so that the Father can incessantly scan the roads for a glimpse of a returning prodigal.

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Staffs for the journey

Each person holds a staff, which is so long it, cuts the picture into sections. Why should beings with wings, that can fly like the light, have need of a staff for their journey? Because we are on a journey and these three persons enter into our journey, our slow movement across the face of the earth. Their feet are tired from travelling. God is with us in the weariness of our human road. The traveller God sits down at our ordinary tables and spreads them with a hint of heaven

The Table

The table or altar lies at the centre of the picture. It is at once the place of Abraham's hospitality to the angels, and God's place of hospitality to us. That ambiguity lies at the heart of communion, at the heart of worship. As soon as we open a sacred place for God to enter, for God to be welcomed and adored, it becomes his place. It is we who are welcomed, it is we who must 'take off our shoes' because of the holiness of the ground.

Contained in the centre of the circle, a sign of death. The lamb, killed. The holy meal brought to the table. All points to this space, this mystery: within it, everything about God is summed up and expressed, his power, his glory, and above all his love. And it is expressed in such a way that we can reach it. For the space at this table is on our side. We are invited to join the group at the table and receive the heart of their being for ourselves.

We are invited to complete the circle, to join the dance, to complete the movements of God in the world by our own response. Below the altar a rectangle marks the holy place where the relics of the martyrs were kept in a church. It lies before us. It invites us to come into the depth and intimacy of all that is represented here. Come follow the Spirit up the hill of prayer. Come, live in the shadow of the Son of God, rest yourself beneath his tree of life. Come, journey to the home, prepared for you in the house of your Father.

The table is spread, the door is open. Come.

Andrei Rublev was born circa 1360. Little is known of his early life however, his name is associated with the history of the Moscow artistic school. Many of his works, just as those of his disciples and followers, originated in Moscow or in towns and monasteries around it. His works can be viewed in both the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow and the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg. He died on January 29, 1430 and is buried at the Andronikov Monastery in Moscow.

Thus Andrei Rublev's icon, while being an unsurpassed work of iconography, is first and foremost a "theology in color," which instructs us in all that concerns the revelation of the triune God and the three Persons of the Holy Trinity.

Divine Mercy Icon



The image of Jesus, the Divine Mercy, as He revealed Himself to Saint Faustina Kowalska. This icon shows the resurrected Christ in the Upper Room on Saint Thomas Sunday, bestowing blessing and mercy. Created with the kind assistance of the Divine Mercy Apostolate.

The Creation of Adam

by Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni

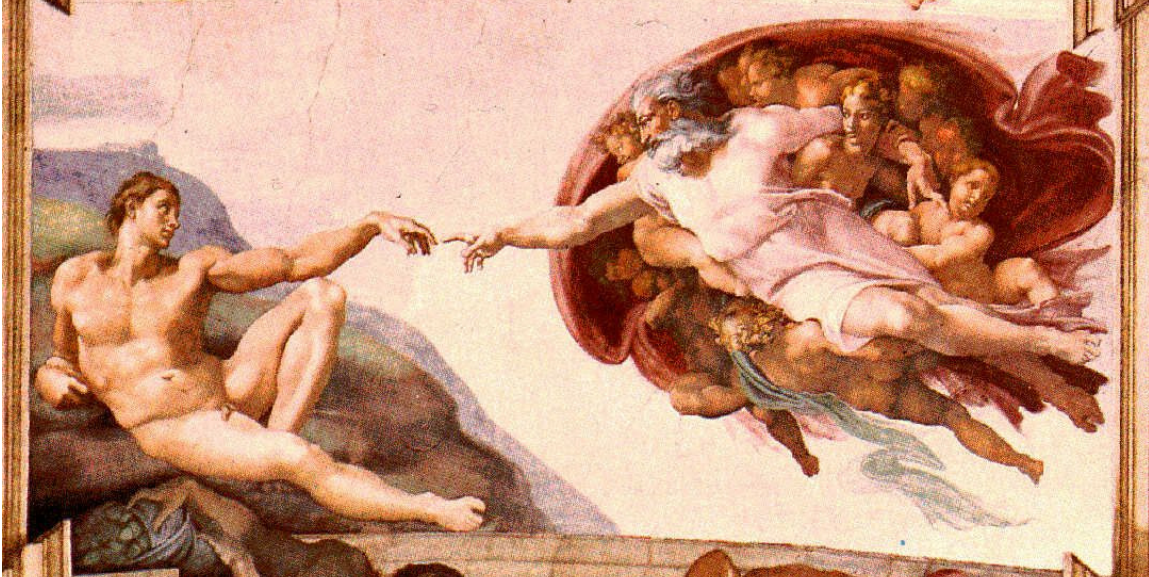
Do you recognize these hands? They're famous hands. These are the hands at the very center of the scene that Michelangelo painted in the center of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The scene is the creation of Adam.

In this painting, God has molded Adam out of the dust of the Earth, but Adam is still just another animal. Notice how God makes all the effort, stretching to cover the entire distance, while Adam waits indifferently, as if he couldn't care less what happens next.

But what happens next is that God touches Adam, and Adam comes truly alive – as an eternal being created in the very image of God. After this touch, man and God have an intimate relationship, and walk together through the garden in the cool of the day.



Without having seen the Sistine Chapel one can form no appreciable idea of what one man is capable of achieving. - *Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Rome 1787*



The Creation of Adam is a fresco in the Sistine Chapel, painted by Michelangelo Buonarroti *circa* 1511. It illustrates the Biblical story from the Book of Genesis in which God the Father breathes life into Adam, the first man. Chronologically the fourth in the series of panels depicting episodes from Genesis on the Sistine ceiling, it was among the last to be completed. It is arguably one of the most famous images in the world.

God is depicted as a bearded old man wrapped in a swirling cloak that he shares with some cherubim. His left arm is wrapped around a female figure, normally interpreted as Eve. His right arm is outstretched to impart the spark of life from His own finger into that of Adam, whose left arm is extended in a pose mirroring God's. Famously, Adam's finger and God's finger are separated by a slight distance.

The similar poses of God and Adam – the positions of God's right leg and Adam's left are, for instance, nearly identical – reflect the fact that, according to Genesis 1:27, God created man in His own image. At the same time God, who is airborne and appears against ovoid drapery, is contrasted with earthbound Adam, lying on a stable triangle of barren ground (Adam's name comes from a Hebrew word meaning "man").

The inspiration for Michelangelo's treatment of the subject may come from a medieval hymn called *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, which asks the 'finger of the paternal right hand' (*digitus paternae dexteræ*) to give the faithful speech, love and strength.

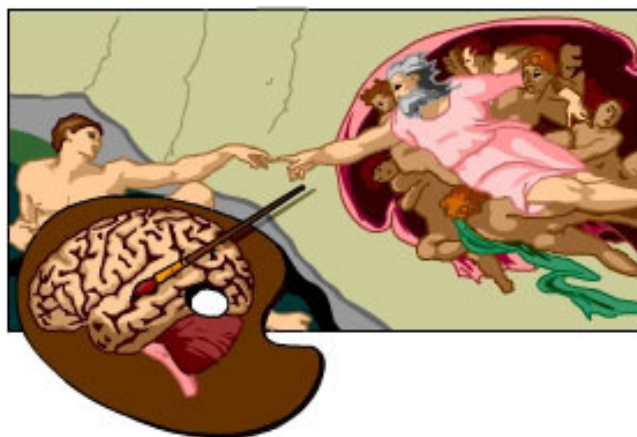
Adam's index finger, the most famous in Western art alongside God's, is in fact not the work of Michelangelo. It was damaged beyond repair by a crack that

appeared in the ceiling in the mid-16th century and was repainted by a papal restorer.

Starting in 1980, the Sistine Chapel was renovated, to remove centuries' worth of ashes and deterioration that had degraded the paintings. Following the restoration, the vibrant colors in the Creation of Adam (which had long since been dulled by the ashes) returned.

In 1990 a physician named Frank Lynn Meshberger noted in the medical publication the Journal of the American Medical Association that the background figures and shapes portrayed behind the figure of God appeared to be an anatomically accurate picture of the human brain, including the frontal lobe, optic chiasm, brain stem, pituitary gland, and the major sulci of the cerebrum. As he gazed at a three-page foldout colour reproduction of the 'Creation of Adam,' he was... *"In the fresco traditionally called the 'Creation of Adam', but which might be more aptly titled the 'Endowment of Adam', I believe that Michelangelo encoded a special message.I immediately struck by the shape of the image surrounding God and the angels. It was the same thing I had been working with all day! It was the unmistakable outline of the mid-sagittal cross-section of a human brain."*

At first, he noticed that the swirling green robe corresponded with the vertebral artery, which follows an irregular path upward toward the pons. Then he noticed the angel's leg extending below the base of the pink outline, that matched the anterior and posterior pituitary. The angel's foot was depicted as bifid, in two parts rather than five toes. Then he noticed the general outline of the sulcus, and the fissure of silvius, which separates the frontal from the parietal lobe. *"Until I looked through the transparency I didn't realise that one of the angel's backs was the pons, that the legs and hips were the spinal cord... The knee of the flexed right leg of the angel with the bifid foot represents the transected optic chiasm, the thigh the optic nerve and the leg itself the optic tract..."*



The Artist's View

Imagine the artist, Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni, working alone, suspended high above the floor in a scaffold, lying on his back, working in a difficult medium he did not particularly care for. Yet he was already famous, and was no doubt compelled by his pride, and his artistic passion, to strive for the perfection that had earned him the well-deserved sobriquet, 'divine'.

Despite his discomfort, his well-known dislike of painting, and his desire to return to sculpting the figures for the tomb of Julius II, within the space of four years this incredible individual painted some 300 figures, adorning more than 5800 square feet of the St Peter's Sistine Chapel ceiling with a stunning masterwork beyond what many could achieve in a dozen lifetimes¹.

A New Perspective

If you have an opportunity to view some recent reproductions, or the good fortune to view directly these newly cleaned and restored magnificent frescoes, allow your gaze to linger just a bit longer on *The Creation of Adam*.

Viewed purely as a singular work of art, this scene, unnamed by the artist, is arguably one of his greatest masterpieces. It has become one of the most well-known images in the world. And now, close to 500 years after Michelangelo painted it, an astonishing theory provides an entirely new perception of the work, and perhaps an insight into the mind of its creator.

What is usually interpreted from this particular scene is that Adam is not being physically created, but is in the process of receiving something momentous, yet subtle, from the hand of God. Adam's languid posture appears to be one of near mindless repose, whereas the figure of the Creator fairly bristles with energy. The composition enables the viewer almost to perceive the passage of a spark jumping the gap between the outstretched, not quite touching, fingers.

Religious Symbolism, Philosophy, or Humour?

Scholars and art historians have long recognised that Michelangelo habitually made liberal use of symbolism in both painting and sculpture, and perhaps he was also fond of visual puzzles and humour². For example, the 'supporting cast', and the accompanying embellishments, (the nude figures, the prophets and sibyls³, the scenes in the medallions⁴ and spandrels⁵), which adorn the Sistine Chapel ceiling, have never been satisfactorily interpreted.

There is some speculation that much of the symbolism attributed to Michelangelo's works is due not only to the cultural and religious climate of Florence in the 1480s and early 1500s, but also the philosophy of Neoplatonism. There is evidence that at the time of painting the *Creation of Adam*, Michelangelo was influenced by the Neoplatonic teachings of Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), and Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494). His writings and poetry of that time reflect his

belief in the divine origin of art, and of physical beauty, and that the intellect is itself divine.

The outline of the human brain in the *Creation of Adam* may then be interpreted as the artist's pictorial declaration of his belief equating the divine gift of intellect with that of the soul.

However, since one of the axioms of Neoplatonism is an insistence that none of the really important truths, such as the concept of God, can be communicated by conceptual means, a reciprocal interpretation is just as valid: perhaps Michelangelo is expressing his belief that any human concept of God is necessarily inadequate, and any image of God is thereby a creation of mind; in this case, the mind of Michelangelo.

The Mind's Eye

Or perhaps neither interpretation is accurate. The image of the brain on the Sistine Chapel may be no more than a trick of perception, similar to our imagination causing us to see figures in the clouds; faces on the wall-paper. The fresco's resemblance to the cross-section of the human brain may be a message not from the great artist, but from our own minds.

For centuries, the significance of the Sistine Chapel paintings has been analyzed by historians, dissected by critics, and debated by theologians and intellectuals, most of whom were content with the 'obvious' interpretation of the *Creation of Adam* scene. Cleaning and restoration has reawakened interest in the frescoes, and Dr Meshberger's analysis of this individual image impels an even closer look, adding yet another dimension to the mystery.

Quite likely Michelangelo would have enjoyed the speculation and controversy engendered by his work, and if asked to explain his motives, and the symbolism of his creations, would have kept an enigmatic silence.

Originally, the project called for the depiction of Christ's 12 apostles. It is believed Michelangelo told Julius II this would be a shameful waste of space! Subsequently, the artist wrote to a friend saying he had been given free rein to paint more or less whatever he wanted.

When we gather to worship, we experience the pain of separation from God, and we come here to try to resurrect that relationship we once had with God. As we invoke God's name, we seek to return to the moment, when we will encounter God in a powerful way and be made truly alive from that encounter.

So it's important to recognize these hands.

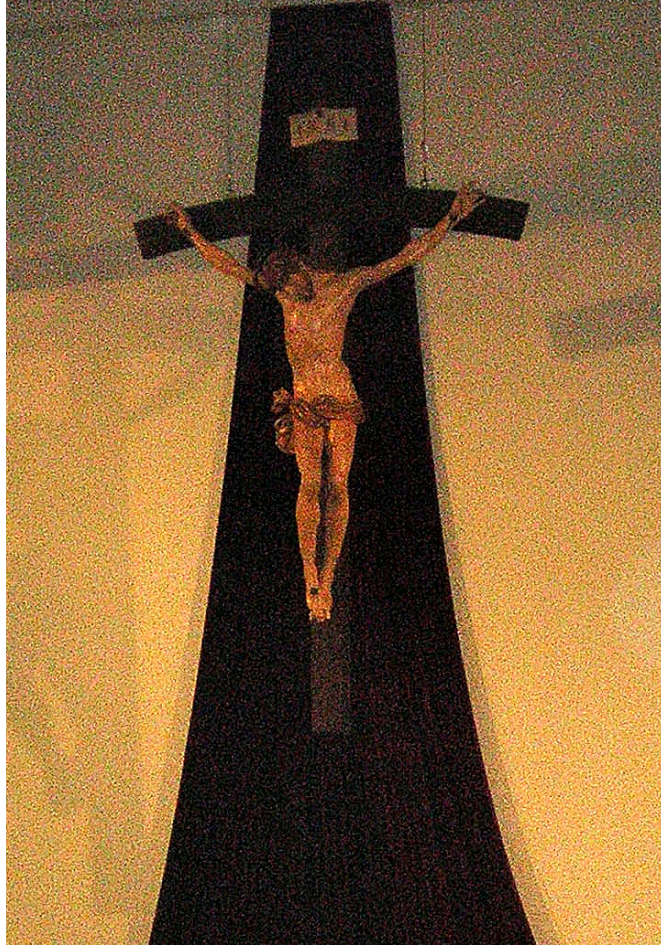
One of them is God's.

And the other one is yours.

Oh, God, forgive us. We have lived our lives without You and have become too casual about the treasure of communion with You. We come here today seeking to re-establish that relationship. Come to us, we pray – touch us – and fill us with Your Holy Spirit. Allow us once again to walk with You in the garden in the cool of the day.

Amen.

**Our Crucifix
inspired by Michelangelo**



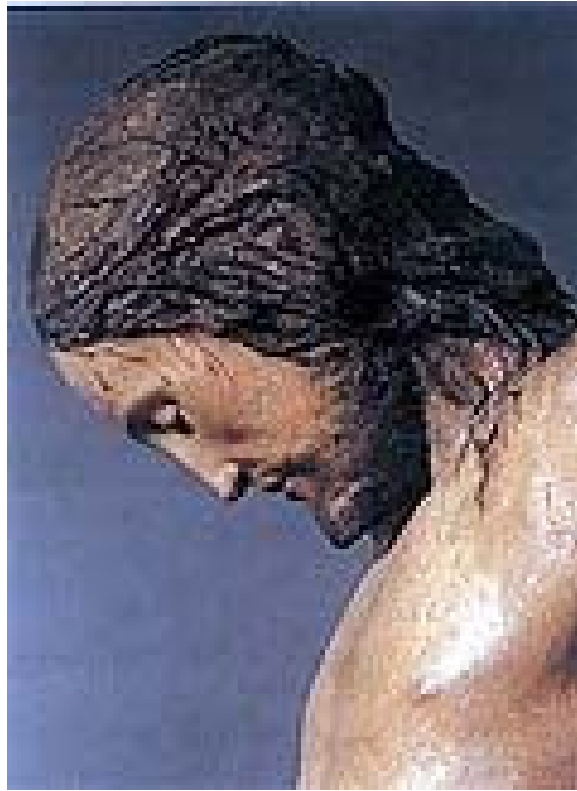




For the church of Santo Spirito in Florence, Michelangelo made a crucifix of wood which was placed above the lunette of the high altar, where it still is. He made this to please the prior, who placed rooms at his disposal where Michelangelo very often used to examine the bodies of the deceased in order to discover the secrets of anatomy.



Crucifix by Michelangelo in the church of Santo Spirito in Florence



Poems by Michelangelo

Scarce had I seen for the first time his eyes,
Which to your living eyes were life and light,
When, closed at last in death's injurious night,
He opened them on God in Paradise.
I know it, and I weep — too late made wise:
Yet was the fault not mine; for death's fell spite
Robbed my desire of that supreme delight
Which in your better memory never dies.
Therefore, Lord Divine, if the task be mine
To make unique Christ smile in stone
For ever, now that earth hath made him dim,
If the beloved within the lover shine,

Since art without him cannot work alone,
You must I carve to tell the world of him.

By Michelangelo

From thy fair face I learn, O my loved lord,
That which no mortal tongue can rightly say;
The soul imprisoned in her house of clay,
Held by thee, to God hath often soared.
And though the vulgar, vain, malignant horde
Attribute what their grosser wills obey,
Yet shall this fervent homage that I pay,
This love, this faith, pure joys for us afford.
Lo, all the lovely things we find on earth,
Resemble for the soul that rightly sees
That source of bliss divine which gave us birth:
Nor have we first-fruits or remembrances
Of heaven elsewhere. Thus, loving loyally,
I rise to God, and make death sweet by thee.

By Michelangelo

Our kneeling Madonna



“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee!
Blessed art thou amongst woman.”

“Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.”

My soul doth magnify the Lord.
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For He hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden:

for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For He that is mighty hath done to me great things:
and holy is his name.

And his mercy is on them that fear Him
from generation to generation.

He hath showed strength with his arm:
He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat,
and hath exalted them of low degree.

He hath filled the hungry with good things:
and the rich He hath sent empty away.

He, in remembrance of his mercy, hath helped his servant Israel.

As He spoke to our ancestors,
to Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

Luke 1: 46-55

“O Mary,
conceived without sin,
pray for us who have recourse to thee.”

the Infant Christ Child



“Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus”



Silence of Mary

Holy Mary, Mother of God, you who treasured all things and pondered them carefully in your heart, teach us that deep, interior silence which enfolded you throughout your lifetime - -

the silence of the Annunciation, of faith, mission and obedience;

the silence of the Visitation, of humility, service and praise;

the silence of Bethlehem, of birth, incarnation and wonder;

the silence of the flight into Egypt, of perseverance, hope and trust;

the silence of Nazareth, of simplicity, intimacy and communion;

the silence of Mt. Calvary, of courage, death and abandonment;

the silence of Easter, of resurrection, jubilation and glory;

the silence of Ascension, of fulfillment, transformation and new creation;

the silence of Pentecost, of peace, power and love.

Mary, in your wisdom, teach us that silence which enables us to listen to the small, still voice of our God; which compels us to worship Him alone in spirit and in truth; which empowers us to acknowledge our nothingness and exult confidently in our Savior; which frees us to lose ourselves in unceasing adoration of the God who is Infinite Love. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us now and always, that we may enter into that silence of yours which unites us to Jesus, your Son, in the mystery of His silence before the Father of mercies. AMEN.

&

Our Holy Family Carving



**&
Our Saint Joseph Carving**



Life and Glories of Saint Joseph

CHAPTER 1

Joseph Included in the Order of the Hypostatic Union

WHATEVER God disposes is disposed in a marvelous and perfect order. Wherefore the Church which Jesus came to found on earth imitates the Heavenly Sion. As in Heaven there are angelic hierarchies, and in these ranks there are diverse orders, so also on earth there is a hierarchy of grace, and in that hierarchy are included various orders or ministries, which, according to the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas, excel each other in proportion to their approximation to God. The highest of all these orders, whether angelic or human, is the order of the Hypostatic Union, in which is Christ Jesus, God and Man. By the Hypostatic Union is meant that the Eternal Son of God, in His Incarnation, assumed human nature, and united it to Himself in Personal unity; in other words, that in the one

Divine Person of Jesus Christ, the two Natures, the Divine Nature and the Human Nature, ever distinct in themselves, became inseparably and eternally united.

If a wonderful order is displayed in all the works of nature, an order supremely perfect is displayed in all the works of grace, especially in the great work of the Incarnation. Among these orders of grace some precede the mystery of the Incarnation, others follow it. Among those which precede it the most remote is the order of the Patriarchs, chosen to prepare the progenitors of Jesus down to St. Joachim and St. Anne. To some of these, as to Abraham and to David, it was expressly revealed that of their blood and of their family, the Savior of men should be born into the world. The next is the Levitical and sacerdotal order, preordained by God to figure in all its rites the Priesthood of Jesus, His Church., His Sacraments, the Bloody sacrifice of the Cross, and the Unbloody Sacrifice of the Altar. The third is that of the Prophets, destined to foretell and announce to the world, so many centuries before the coming of Jesus, His Birth of a Virgin, His country, the place of His Nativity, His flight into Egypt, His Apostles, his preaching, miracles, His Passion and Death, his Resurrection and glorious Ascension into Heaven. Greater than all these Prophets was John the Baptist, because destined and preordained to be the immediate Precursor of Christ, and to point to Him as being actually present on the earth. . . These are the orders which under the Old Law preceded Jesus.

Others succeeded Him, and these are the various orders or ministries of Holy Church, which form the ecclesiastical hierarchy, beginning with the Apostles, who were to render to the whole earth and to all ages their solemn testimony to the Divinity of Jesus Christ; they were to announce all His Doctrine, His Law, His Sacraments; they were to found and spread His Church throughout the world, so that all might attain salvation. And, as the Apostolic order was nearer than any other to Jesus, even so, says St. Thomas Aquinas, did the Apostles receive greater grace than any other saint in the other orders of the Church.

Now, above all these orders rises supreme the order of the Hypostatic Union. All the other orders, including the angelic, are subordinate and subject to it; for this reason, that Jesus is the beginning, the author, and the head of this order, and on Jesus, as Sovereign Prince, depends every hierarchy, every sacred principedom in Heaven and on earth, since Jesus is the end of the whole law [Rom. 10:4] . . . Jesus is the sole and true source of salvation to all men. By faith in Him Who was to come all were saved who lived justly from Adam until His day; and all those who have lived and shall live justly since His coming have been and shall be saved by Him alone. . . all the various orders of grace circle, from Him alone receiving light, virtue and power to fulfill faithfully the holy offices to which they are ordained; and so much the greater or less grace and dignity do they receive as they are more or less approximated in their ministry to Jesus, the author of grace, just as one who is nearer to the fire participates more largely in its heat. It is clear, then, that the order of the Hypostatic Union transcends and

surpasses the other subaltern orders, even as the sun transcends the inferior stars.

Now, Joseph by Divine predestination was placed in this sovereign order. Three only composed it—Jesus, Mary, Joseph. Jesus is true God and true Man; Mary is true Mother of God and Mother of men; Joseph is true spouse of Mary and putative father of Jesus. Jesus is the principal subject of the Incarnation, and the author of the Redemption of the world; Mary is the immediate co-operatrix and, so to say, the executrix of the Incarnation itself; Joseph, the faithful depository of these two most precious pledges, was to provide that this sublime mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption should be brought about with the greatest possible congruity, so that the honor of the Mother and of the God-Man, her Son, should remain intact.

That Joseph should be comprised in this supreme order is not a mere devout opinion or the fruit of pious meditation, it is a sure decision of the soundest theology. Suarez, that eminent theologian, after having spoken of the Order of the Apostles, upon which he said the greatest grace was conferred, goes on to say: "There are other ministries appertaining to the order of the Hypostatic Union, which in its kind is more perfect, as we affirmed of the dignity of the Mother of God, and in this order is constituted the ministry of St. Joseph; and, although it be in the lowest grade of it, nevertheless, in this respect, it surpasses all others, because it exists in a superior order!" Thus spoke Suarez, the learned theologian of Granada, about three hundred years ago, when the opinion of the faithful respecting St. Joseph and the devotion due to him had not been so openly and generally displayed.

But the doctors who followed spoke still more clearly. Giovanni di Cartagena, contemporary of Bellarmine and Baronius, and very dear to Pope Pius V for his piety and science, out of the numerous learned homilies which he wrote, devoted thirteen to the praises of Joseph. After having spoken of the Apostolic order, he passes on to treat of the order of the Hypostatic Union, and says that in its kind it is more perfect than the other, and that in this order the first place is held by the Humanity of Christ, which is immediately united to the Person of the Word; the second place is held by the Blessed Virgin, who conceived and brought forth the Incarnate Word; the third place is held by St. Joseph, to whom was committed by God the special care, never given to any other, of feeding, nursing, educating, and protecting a God-made-man! After Cartagena comes P. Giuseppe Antonio Patrignani, highly praised also by Benedict XIV, who, almost two centuries ago, wrote thus of St. Joseph: " He, as constituted head of the Family immediately belonging to the service of a God-Man, transcends in dignity all the other Saints; wherefore he is happily established in an order which is superior to all the other orders in the Church."

We might adduce other doctors of high authority, but we will proceed to consider some of the legitimate consequences which flow from this doctrine.

1. It is an exceeding honor to Joseph "to be comprised in the same order wherein are Jesus Himself, the Son of God, the King of kings, and Mary, Mother of God and Queen of the universe, to be united with them in the closest relations, and enjoy their most entire confidence. The nobles of the earth deem themselves to be highly honored in being brought into near association with monarchs of renown, holding the foremost places in their courts, and being the most trusted in their councils. What, then, shall we say of Joseph, who, placed in the order of the Hypostatic Union, was destined by God, not only first in His court and the closest in His confidence, but even to be the reputed father of the King of kings; to be, not only the confidential friend, but the very spouse of the most exalted of all the empresses in the universe? Next to the Divine Maternity, no honor in the world is comparable with this.

2. To be comprised in the order of the Hypostatic Union implies being, after Jesus and Mary, superior to all the other Saints, both of the Old and the New Testament; and the reason is clear: for, this order being superior to all the other orders in the Church, it follows that whosoever has a place in this order, albeit in its lowest grade, as Joseph has, ranks before all who are even in the highest grade of a lower order, such as that of the Apostles, which is the most eminent among them.

3. It follows that Joseph is superior, not in nature, but in dignity, to the Angels themselves, since the orders of Angels are subject to the order of the Hypostatic Union, subject to Jesus, their King and their Head, subject to Mary, their Queen; hence, as the Apostle declares, when the Eternal Father sent His Divine Son upon earth He commanded all the Angels to adore Him. And on account of Jesus the Angels became subject also to Mary and to Joseph: thus we find them hastening gladly to serve them, to warn them, to console them; and were they not sent expressly from Heaven to act as attendants on Joseph, at one time to assure him that his Spouse has conceived the Son of God Himself; at another to make known to him the plot of Herod, so that he might place the Virgin and her Divine Son in safety by flying into Egypt; and, again, to announce to him that now he may joyfully return into the land of Israel?

4. We conclude that Joseph was comprehended in this order because he was truly the head and guardian of this Divine Family. To rule and govern this august family belonged of right to Jesus, who was God. Mary and Joseph, exalted as they were in dignity, were, nevertheless, only creatures; but Jesus willed to give an example of the most perfect humility. It was His will to magnify our Saint, and to concede to him this high glory, making him the head and guardian of His family; so that Joseph had rule and authority over the Son of God Himself and over the very Mother of the Son of God. And Joseph, being thus destined to be the head and guardian of Jesus, the head and guardian of Mary, became at the same time the patron and guardian of the Church, which is the spouse of Jesus and, in a manner, the daughter of Mary. Whence [St.] Pius IX, of blessed memory, in proclaiming Joseph Patron of the Church, did not so much confer a

new title of honor upon him as affirm and declare this his most ancient prerogative, which had not before been so expressly promulgated by Holy Church.

5. It follows that Joseph was comprised in that order and in that family the highest representation which it is possible to conceive, inasmuch as he was made the very representative of the Divine Father, Who alone has the right to call Jesus His Son, having begotten Him from all eternity; and yet that same God, Who by the mouth of Isaias protested that He would never give His glory to another, that God Who, in communicating to the Word and to the Holy Spirit His Divine essence, does not in any wise communicate to them His Divine paternity, was so generous to Joseph as to concede to him His glory, and communicate to him His name and His paternity; not actually, for that was impossible, but so that he should be in His place and stead, and should be called the father of Him who was the Divine Word, and that the Word Himself should call Joseph by the sweet name of father, so that he might with true joy appropriate to himself that passage in Holy Scripture:

"I will be to Him a father and He shall be to me a son!" Herein we see manifested the great love of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity for our Saint and the confidence They reposed in him; for the Eternal Father committed wholly into his charge His well-beloved Son; the Divine Son delivered Himself entirely to his care and to his will; the Holy Spirit consigned and committed to him His most immaculate Spouse; so that this Holy Family, of which Joseph became the head, was another Triad on earth, a resplendent image of the Most Holy Triad in Heaven, the Ever-Blessed Trinity: Joseph representing the Eternal Father, Jesus representing and being in very truth the Eternal Word, and Mary representing the Eternal Love, the Holy Spirit. This thought is borrowed from the Doctor of the Church, St. Francis de Sales. "We may say"—these are his words—"that the Holy Family was a Trinity on Earth, which in a certain way represented the Heavenly Trinity Itself."

6. Finally, it follows that Joseph, in that he was comprised in that sublime order, superior to that of all the other Saints, must as a natural consequence have been predestined to receive greater gifts and graces than all the other Saints, that he might be made worthy to be so near to Jesus and Mary, and fitted to discharge most faithfully those high ministries to which he was elected. Hence the pious Bernardine de Bustis makes this bold assertion: "Since Joseph was to be the guardian, companion, and ruler of the Most Blessed Virgin and of the Child Jesus, is it possible to conceive that God could have made a mistake in the choice of him? or that He could have permitted him to be deficient in any respect? or could have failed to make him most perfect?" The very idea would be the grossest of errors. When God selects anyone to perform some great work He bestows upon him every virtue needful for its accomplishment."

Let us rejoice, then, with our most loving Patriarch that he has been exalted to so

sublime an order, and has obtained such grace, power, and dignity as none other, after Jesus and Mary, has ever received, to the glory of God, Who made him so great, and for our profit and that of the whole Church.

Saint Joseph's Prayer

*Saint Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong,
so prompt before the Throne of God,
I place in you, all my interests and desires.*

*Oh, Saint Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession,
and obtain for me, from your Divine Son, all spiritual blessings,
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

*So that having engaged here below your heavenly power,
I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers.*

(Here, ask favor)

*Oh, Saint Joseph,
I never weary of contemplating you, and Jesus asleep in your arms.
I dare not approach, while He reposes near your heart.
Press Him in my name, and kiss His fine head for me,
and ask Him to return the kiss when I draw my dying breath.
Saint Joseph, Patron of Departing Souls, pray for us.... Amen.*

Prayers to St. Joseph

*O God, come to my assistance. O Lord, make haste to help me.
"Glory Be."*

*Loving Saint Joseph,
Our Heavenly Father, has blessed the Church by calling you to be the
Foster father and faithful guardian of our Redeemer,
Chaste spouse and protector of the ever Virgin Mary,
the Immaculate Mother God,
respectful son-in-law of Anna and Joachim,*

devoted son of *Jacob* and grandson of *Matthan*,
and noble descendent of *King David*.
We are blessed to have you as the protector of the *Church*,
and patron of our parish.
I humbly beseech you to instruct me in every doubt,
to comfort me in every affliction,
to obtain for me, and for all, a humble and charitable mind,
with the knowledge and love of the *Heart of Jesus*,
with perfect resignation to the *Divine Will*,
and finally, *I* implore you to grant me the grace of a happy death.

Amen.

Lord, have mercy on us
Christ, have mercy on us
Lord, have mercy on us
God our *Father* in heaven
God the *Son*, *Redeemer* of the world
God the *Holy Spirit*
Holy Trinity, one *God*

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.
have mercy on us.

<i>Holy Mary</i> , <i>Mother of God</i>	pray for us.
<i>Saint Joseph</i>	pray for us.
<i>Noble son</i> of the <i>House of David</i>	pray for us.
<i>Light</i> of patriarchs	pray for us.
<i>Husband</i> of the ever <i>Virgin Mary</i>	pray for us.
<i>Guardian</i> of the <i>Immaculate Conception</i>	pray for us.
<i>Foster father</i> of the <i>Son of God</i>	pray for us.
<i>Faithful guardian</i> of <i>Christ</i>	pray for us.
<i>Head</i> of the <i>Holy Family</i>	pray for us.
<i>Patron</i> of our <i>Parish</i>	pray for us.
<i>Joseph</i> , chaste and just	pray for us.
<i>Joseph</i> , prudent and brave	pray for us.
<i>Joseph</i> , obedient and loyal	pray for us.
<i>Pattern</i> of patience	pray for us.
<i>Lover</i> of <i>Poverty</i>	pray for us.

<i>Model of workers</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>
<i>Example to parents</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>
<i>Guardian of virgins</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>
<i>Pillar of family life</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>
<i>Comfort of the troubled</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>
<i>Hope of the sick</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>
<i>Patron of the dying</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>
<i>Terror of evil spirits</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>
<i>Protector of the Church</i>	<i>pray for us.</i>

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world
Graciously hear us,
O Lord;

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world
have mercy on us.

*"Our Father" & "Hail Mary" & "O Mary, conceived without
 sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."*

*May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil
 and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.*

Novena to St. Joseph

Saint Joseph, I, your unworthy child, greet you. You are the faithful protector and intercessor of all who love and venerate you. You know that I have special confidence in you and that, after Jesus and Mary, I place all my hope of salvation in you, for you are especially powerful with God and will never abandon your faithful servants. Therefore I humbly invoke you and commend myself, with all who are dear to me and all that belong to me, to your intercession. I beg of you, by your love for Jesus and Mary, not to abandon me during life and to assist me at the hour of my death.

Glorious Saint Joseph, spouse of the Immaculate Virgin, obtain for me a pure, humble, charitable mind, and perfect resignation to the divine Will. Be my guide, my father, and my model through life that I may merit to die as you did in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

Loving Saint Joseph, faithful follower of Jesus Christ, I raise my heart to you to implore your powerful intercession in obtaining from the Divine Heart of Jesus all the graces necessary for my spiritual and temporal welfare, particularly the grace of a happy death, and the special grace I now implore:

(Mention your request).

Guardian of the Word Incarnate, I feel confident that your prayers in my behalf will be graciously heard before the throne of God. Amen.

MEMORARE OF ST. JOSEPH

Remember, most pure spouse of Mary, ever Virgin, my loving protector, Saint Joseph, that no one ever had recourse to your protection or asked for your aid without obtaining relief. Confiding, therefore, in your goodness, I come before you and humbly implore you. Despise not my petitions, foster-father of the Redeemer, but graciously receive them. Amen.

O blessed Joseph, faithful guardian of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ, protector of thy chaste spouse, the virgin Mother of God, I choose you this day to be my special patron and advocate and I firmly resolve to honor you all the days of my life. Therefore I humbly beseech you to receive me as your devotee, to instruct me in every doubt, to comfort me in every affliction, to obtain for me and for all the knowledge and love of the Heart of Jesus, and finally to defend and protect me at the hour of my death. Amen

St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus, pray for us.

Prayer to Saint Joseph Before Mass

O Blessed Joseph, happy man, to whom it was given not only to see and to hear that God Whom many kings longed to see, and saw not, to hear, and heard not; but also to carry Him in your arms, to embrace Him, to clothe Him, and guard and defend Him.

V Pray for us, O Blessed Joseph.

R That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

O God, Who has given us a royal priesthood, we beseech Thee, that as Blessed Joseph was found worthy to touch with his hands, and to bear in his arms, Thy only-begotten Son, born of the Virgin Mary, so may we be made fit, by cleanness of heart and blamelessness of life, to minister at Thy holy altar; may we, this day, with reverent devotion partake of the Sacred Body and Blood of Your Only-begotten Son, and may we in the world to come be accounted worthy of receiving an everlasting reward. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Roman Missal

Prayer to Saint Joseph

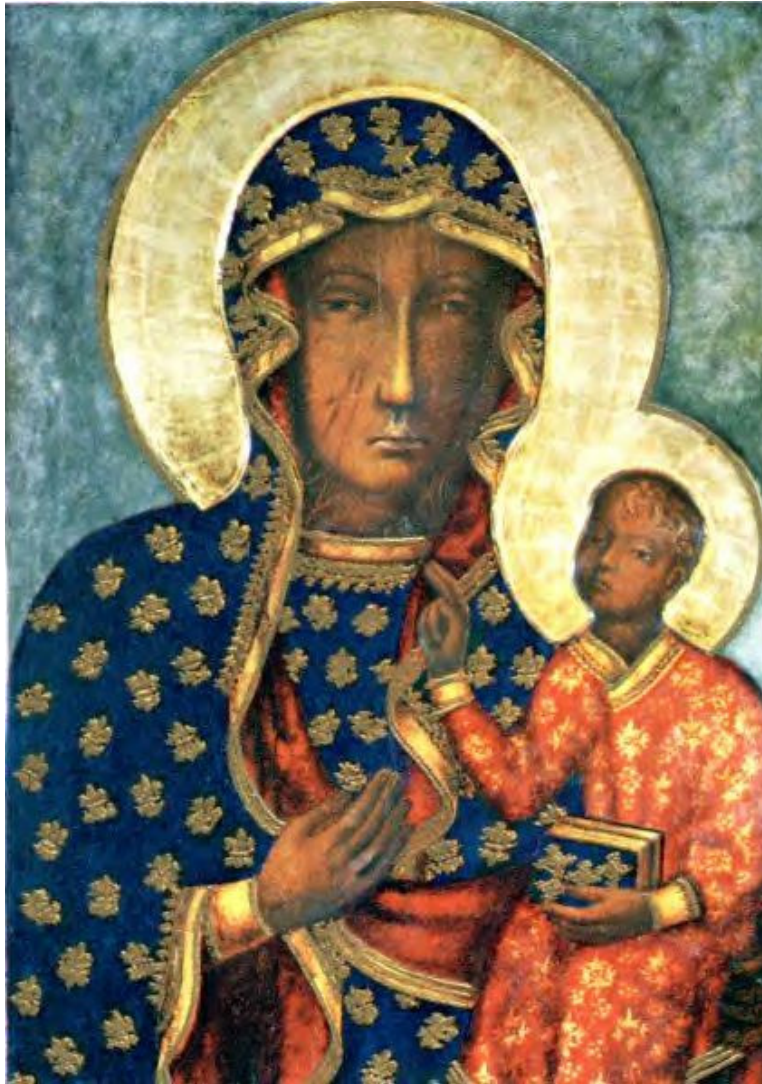
*O glorious Saint Joseph,
remind all who work
that they are not alone
in their labor, their joy
or their sufferings,
because Jesus is by our side,
with Mary, his Mother and ours,
supporting them,
wiping sweat from their brow,
and setting a value on their toil.
Teach them to use their labor,
as you did, as a supreme means
of attaining holiness.*

Pope John XXIII

St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus, pray for us.



Our Lady of Czestochowa



Poland's Black Madonna

It is doubtful whether any other representation of Our Blessed Mother with Her Divine Child, possesses a more ancient and glorious history than the painting of Our Lady of Czestochowa.

The Black Madonna was painted by St. Luke the Evangelist; and it was while painting the picture, Mary told him about the life of Jesus, which he later incorporated into his Gospel.

Tradition tells us that St. Luke painted it on the top of a cypress wood table which came from the home of the Holy Family. At the request of the faithful, Mary sat for the portrait. Mary was pleased with the finished portrait, *"My grace shall accompany it"*, and so began the miraculous history of the painting.

Venerated for nearly 300 years while hidden in Jerusalem, the painting was discovered by St. Helen while she was searching for the True Cross. She brought it back to Constantinople and presented it to her son, Constantine the Great, first Christian Emperor of Rome. Constantine built a chapel for the portrait and where it remained in for five centuries.

Miracle upon miracle was attributed to the intercession of Mary by persons praying before the portrait. Over the years, many enemies laid siege to Constantinople. The chapel became a center of hope for the people of the city. During one attack the city seemed ready to fall but the people rallied to the painting and the city was saved. Another time the city was under attack and the chapel caught fire. Everything was destroyed except a small section of wall upon which hung the painting of Mary and Jesus. The intense heat and soot from the fire had darkened the already dark olive features of Mary and Jesus.

Eventually it was given as a gift by the Byzantine Emperor to a Ruthenian nobleman. The portrait was brought to Kiev and installed in the Royal Palace of Belz. It remained there for 579 years.

In 1382 the painting received an injury from invading Tartar's. An arrow pierced it, leaving a scar which is still visible on the neck. Concerned with the safety of the painting, Prince Ladislaus Opolski decided to move it to one of his castles in Upper Silesia.

On the brow of a hill called Jasna Gora (bright hill) within a few paces of the town of Czestochowa, the horses drawing the wagon with the painting stopped. No amount of coaxing or goading could make them go on. Mary appeared to Ladislaus and told him this was to be Her new home. The Miraculous Image was placed in a chapel and given to the care of the Basilian monks of the Greek Rite. A few years later, Prince Ladislaus gave it over to the Latin Rite Hermits of Saint Paul who are still there to this day.

Icon of Saint Michael the Archangel



(Hebrew "Who is like God?").

Feast: September 29

"And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels . . . And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan . . ." —*Revelation 12:7-9*

St. Michael is one of the principal angels; his name was the war-cry of the good angels in the battle fought in heaven against the enemy and his followers. Four times his name is recorded in Scripture:

(1) *Daniel 10:13 sqq.*, Gabriel says to Daniel, when he asks God to permit the Jews to return to Jerusalem: "The Angel [D.V. prince] of the kingdom of the Persians resisted me . . . and, behold Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me . . . and none is my helper in all these things, but Michael your prince";

(2) *Daniel 12*, the Angel speaking of the end of the world and the Antichrist says: "At that time shall Michael rise up, the great prince, who standeth for the children of thy people."

(3) *In the Catholic Epistle of St. Jude*: "When Michael the Archangel, disputing with the devil, contended about the body of Moses", etc. St. Jude alludes to an ancient Jewish tradition of a dispute between Michael and Satan over the body of Moses, an account of which is also found in the apocryphal book on the assumption of Moses (Origen, "De principiis", III, 2, 2). St. Michael concealed the tomb of Moses; Satan, however, by disclosing it, tried to seduce the Jewish people to the sin of hero-worship. St. Michael also guards the body of Eve, according to the "Revelation of Moses" ("Apocryphal Gospels", etc., ed. A. Walker, Edinburgh, p. 647).

(4) *Revelation*: 12:7, "And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon." St. John speaks of the great conflict at the end of time, which reflects also the battle in heaven at the beginning of time. According to the Fathers there is often question of St. Michael in Scripture where his name is not mentioned. They say he was the cherub who stood at the gate of paradise, "to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24), the angel through whom God published the Decalogue to his chosen people, the angel who stood in the way against Balaam (Numbers 22:22 sqq.), the angel who routed the army of Sennacherib (IV Kings 19:35).

Or: Revelation 12:7-12ab

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world--he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Rejoice then, O heaven and you that dwell therein!

Following these Scriptural passages, Christian tradition gives to St. Michael four offices:

- To fight against Satan.
- To rescue the souls of the faithful from the power of the enemy, especially at the hour of death.
- To be the champion of God's people, the Jews in the Old Law, the Christians in the New Testament; therefore he was the patron of the Church, and of the orders of knights during the Middle Ages.
- To call away from earth and bring men's souls to judgment ("signifer S. Michael repraesentet eas in lucam sanctam", Offert. Miss Defunct.

"Constituit eum principem super animas suscipiendas", Antiph. off. Cf. "Hermas", Pastor, I, 3, Simil. VIII, 3).

Regarding his rank in the celestial hierarchy opinions vary; St. Basil (Hom. de angelis) and other Greek Fathers, also Salmeron, Bellarmine, etc., place St. Michael over all the angels; they say he is called "archangel" because he is the prince of the other angels; others (cf. P. Bonaventura, op. cit.) believe that he is the prince of the seraphim, the first of the nine angelic orders. But, according to St. Thomas (Summa Ia.113.3) he is the prince of the last and lowest choir, the angels. The Roman Liturgy seems to follow the Greek Fathers; it calls him "Princeps militiae coelestis quem honorificant angelorum cives". The hymn of the Mozarabic Breviary places St. Michael even above the Twenty-four Elders. The Greek Liturgy styles him *Archistrategos*, "highest general" (cf. Menaia, 8 Nov. and 6 Sept.).

VENERATION

It would have been natural to St. Michael, the champion of the Jewish people, to be the champion also of Christians, giving victory in war to his clients. The early Christians, however, regarded some of the martyrs as their military patrons: St. George, St. Theodore, St. Demetrius, St. Sergius, St. Procopius, St. Mercurius, etc.; but to St. Michael they gave the care of their sick. At the place where he was first venerated, in Phrygia, his prestige as angelic healer obscured his interposition in military affairs. It was from early times the centre of the true cult of the holy angels, particularly of St. Michael. Tradition relates that St. Michael in the earliest ages caused a medicinal spring to spout at Chairotopa near Colossae, where all the sick who bathed there, invoking the Blessed Trinity and St. Michael, were cured.

Still more famous are the springs which St. Michael is said to have drawn from the rock at Colossae (Chonae, the present Khonas, on the Lycus). The pagans directed a stream against the sanctuary of St. Michael to destroy it, but the archangel split the rock by lightning to give a new bed to the stream, and sanctified forever the waters which came from the gorge. The Greeks claim that this apparition took place about the middle of the first century and celebrate a feast in commemoration of it on 6 September (Analecta Bolland., VIII, 285-328). Also at Pythia in Bithynia and elsewhere in Asia the hot springs were dedicated to St. Michael.

At Constantinople likewise, St. Michael was the great heavenly physician. His principal sanctuary, the Michaelion, was at Sosthenion, some fifty miles south of Constantinople; there the archangel is said to have appeared to the Emperor Constantine. The sick slept in this church at night to wait for a manifestation of St. Michael; his feast was kept there 9 June. Another famous church was within the walls of the city, at the thermal baths of the Emperor Arcadius; there the synaxis of the archangel was celebrated 8 November. This feast spread over the

entire Greek Church, and the Syrian, Armenian, and Coptic Churches adopted it also; it is now the principal feast of St. Michael in the Orient. It may have originated in Phrygia, but its station at Constantinople was the Thermae of Arcadius (Martinow, "Annus Graeco-slavicus", 8 Nov.). Other feasts of St. Michael at Constantinople were: 27 October, in the "Promotu" church; 18 June, in the Church of St. Julian at the Forum; and 10 December, at Athaea.

The Christians of Egypt placed their life-giving river, the Nile under the protection of St. Michael; they adopted the Greek feast and kept it 12 November; on the twelfth of every month they celebrate a special commemoration of the archangel, but 12 June, when the river commences to rise, they keep as a holiday of obligation the feast of St. Michael "for the rising of the Nile", *euche eis ten symmetron anabasin ton potamion hydaton*.

At Rome the Leonine Sacramentary (sixth century) has the "Natale Basilicae Angeli via Salaria", 30 September; of the five Masses for the feast three mention St. Michael. The Gelasian Sacramentary (seventh century) gives the feast "S. Michaelis Archangeli", and the Gregorian Sacramentary (eighth century), "Dedicatio Basilionis S. Angeli Michaelis", 29 Sept. A manuscript also here adds "via Salaria" (Ebner, "Miss. Rom. Iter Italicum", 127). This church of the Via Salaria was six miles to the north of the city; in the ninth century it was called *Basilica Archangeli in Septimo* (Armellini, "Chiese di Roma", p. 85). It disappeared a thousand years ago. At Rome also the part of heavenly physician was given to St. Michael. According to an (apocryphal?) legend of the tenth century he appeared over the Moles Hadriani (Castel di S. Angelo), in 950, during the procession which St. Gregory held against the pestilence, putting an end to the plague. Boniface IV (608-15) built on the Moles Hadriani in honour of him, a church, which was styled *St. Michaelis inter nubes (in summitate circi)*.

Well known is the apparition of St. Michael (a. 494 or 530-40), as related in the Roman Breviary, 8 May, at his renowned sanctuary on Monte Gargano, where his original glory as patron in war was restored to him. To his intercession the Lombards of Sipontum (Manfredonia) attributed their victory over the Greek Neapolitans, 8 May, 663. In commemoration of this victory the church of Sipontum instituted a special feast in honour of the archangel, on 8 May, which has spread over the entire Latin Church and is now called (since the time of Pius V) "Apparitio S. Michaelis", although it originally did not commemorate the apparition, but the victory.

In Normandy St. Michael is the patron of mariners in his famous sanctuary at Mont-Saint-Michel in the Diocese of Coutances. He is said to have appeared there, in 708, to St. Aubert, Bishop of Avranches. In Normandy his feast "S. Michaelis in periculo maris" or "in Monte Tumba" was universally celebrated on 18 Oct., the anniversary of the dedication of the first church, 16 Oct., 710; the feast is now confined to the Diocese of Coutances. In Germany, after its evangelization, St. Michael replaced for the Christians the pagan god Wotan, to

whom many mountains were sacred, hence the numerous mountain chapels of St. Michael all over Germany.

The hymns of the Roman Office are said to have been composed by St. Rabanus Maurus of Fulda (d. 856). In art St. Michael is represented as an angelic warrior, fully armed with helmet, sword, and shield (often the shield bears the Latin inscription: *Quis ut Deus*), standing over the dragon, whom he sometimes pierces with a lance. He also holds a pair of scales in which he weighs the souls of the departed (cf. Rock, "The Church of Our Fathers", III, 160), or the book of life, to show that he takes part in the judgment. His feast (29 September) in the Middle Ages was celebrated as a holy day of obligation, but along with several other

Pope Leo XIII decreed that after all masses the following prayer should be recited to protect the Church from the sins of Modernism. This requirement was made optional in the 1960s.



*Saint Michael, the Archangel,
Defend us in the hour of battle,
keep us safe from the wickedness
and snares of the Devil,
May God restrain him, we humbly pray,
and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host,
By the power of God, cast Satan down into Hell,
and with him all the evil spirits
who wander through the world for the ruin of souls.
Amen.*

Many continue to recite this prayer at the conclusion of the Rosary, and in times of great temptation.

No adequate explanation of the Holy Angels is complete without reference to Saint Michael the Archangel. He joins Saints Gabriel and Raphael as the trio of Archangels specifically mentioned by name throughout the Church's history, given their appearance in Sacred.

The “Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel” offers a fitting summary of who this celestial being is and the significant role which he plays in the Almighty’s creation.

Saint Michael the Archangel

An angel is similar to God in that he is a spirit; however, he differs from the Creator in that it is a created spirit while only God is the Uncreated Spirit. This angel has from God a name, meaning “who is like unto God.” Saint Michael belongs to the choir of angels called the Archangels, usually listed eighth of the nine choirs.

Defend us in battle

We readily acknowledge that a fierce war is waging—a terrible conflict which has continued unabated since the fall of the angels. Good and evil constantly do battle. Saint Michael is fervently implored for his powerful, fearless assistance against the considerable forces of the underworld.

By asking for his help, the Christian faithful recognize his longstanding position as protector of God’s holy people.

Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. The devils are like the “good” angels: created spirits without bodies. But, the devils are the fallen angels who disobeyed God rather than submit to His commands. Not only are the devils evil but they also want us to become evil. They delight in setting pitfalls for us. Saint Michael vanquishes the demons; he assists us in negotiating the inevitable hurdles which can trip us.

May God rebuke him, we humbly pray

Already we know that God has defeated Satan. Jesus’ salvific Death and Resurrection was the death knell for Hades and its advocates. Yet, we still are to pray that the Lord will rebuke him. Why? Because we are summoned to state our intention, thereby aligning our wills with that of the Lord’s. We desire what God desires, namely, that Satan’s influence will cease over those who seek to become friends of the Master.

And do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host

The one who prays uses Saint Michael’s title. He has been granted special command among the angels. Furthermore, it is expected that he will do something. There is a tangible anticipation that this Archangel will act.

By the power of God

The Prince of the Heavenly Host must rely on the strength of the Lord. Saint Michael possesses tremendous power because the Creator believes it appropriate that he has it. Saint Michael, too, bows under God's mighty hand.

Cast into Hell Satan and all the evil spirits

Why must Satan and his minions be thrown into Hell if they presently are there? We long for the day when Satan will be tightly bound, never again able to tempt anyone to sin. His dominion will be forever at an end. The vast army of demons will no more roam earth to inflict their damage on souls.

Who prowl throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls

This phrase precisely describes what the devils seek: the everlasting ruination of immortal souls. They waste no time in enticing men and women, boys and girls to forsake Jesus and His call to authentic holiness. Saint Michael is the antidote to the pernicious activities carried on by "Satan and all the evil spirits." This Archangel has the authority from God to stop them.

Amen

This often-used word signals belief and acceptance. It underscores what we have now affirmed. Saint Michael indeed serves God and His children in a notable, lasting manner. The Church professes that this Archangel has been chosen by the Lord Himself to help usher in the reign of abiding peace which Christ came, died and rose to establish.

Disciples of Christ may learn much from Saint Michael the Archangel. He is a true servant who surrenders to the divine directive. He is a warrior who willingly spars with the terrors of Hell. He is an example of sanctity who offers the faithful a model of love for God and zeal for souls.

With the scores of good angels, Saint Michael, the champion, protects and defends the Church Militant. The Church is blest by his presence. Saint Michael the Archangel, pray for us!



Archangel Michael

San Miguel Arcángel,
Defiéndenos en la batalla;
Sé nuestra protección contra la maldad y los engaños del diablo.
Que Dios lo reprenda, es nuestra humilde oración.
O puedas, O príncipe de los Seres Celestiales,
por el poder de Dios, echar a Satanás al infierno,
así como a todos los demás espíritus
que vagan por el mundo
buscando la ruina de las almas.
Amen.

Sacratísimo Corazón de Jesús,
Ten piedad de nosotros.
En el nombre del Padre y del Hijo y del Espíritu Santo.
Amen.

Act of consecration

Oh, most Noble Prince
of the Angelic Hierarchies,
valorous warrior of Almighty God,
and zealous lover of his glory,
terror of the rebellious angels,
and love and delight of all the just,
my beloved Archangel Saint Michael,
desiring to be numbered
among your devoted servants,
today I offer and consecrate myself to you,
and place myself,
my family and all I possess
under your most powerful protection.

I entreat you not to look at how little I,
as your servant have to offer, being only a wretched
sinner, but to gaze rather with favorable eye at the
heartfelt affection with which this offering is made,

and remember that if from this day
onward I am under your patronage,
you must during all my life assist me

and procure for me
the pardon of my many grievous offences and sins,
the grace to love with all my heart my God,
my dear Saviour Jesus,
and my Sweet Mother Mary,

and obtain for me all the help necessary
to arrive to my crown of glory.

Defend me always from my spiritual enemies,
particularly in the last moments of my life.

Come then oh glorious Prince
and succour me in my last struggle,
and with your powerful weapon cast far from me
into the infernal abysses that prevaricator
and proud angel that one day you prostrated
in the celestial battle.

Accompany me then to the throne of God
to sing with you, Archangel Saint Michael
and all the Angels,
praise, honor and glory
to the One who reigns for all eternity.
Amen.

The Chaplet of St. Michael the Archangel

The Chaplet of St. Michael is a wonderful way to honor this great Archangel along with the other nine Choirs of Angels. What do we mean by Choirs? It seems that God has created various orders of Angels. Sacred Scripture distinguishes nine such groupings: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Powers, Virtues, Principalities, Archangels and Angels (Isa 6:2; Gen. 3:24; Col. 1:6; Eph. 1:21; Rom. 8:38). There may be more groupings but these are the only ones that have been revealed to us. The Seraphim is believed to be the highest Choir, the most intimately united to God, while the Angelic Choir is the lowest.

The history of this Chaplet goes back to a devout Servant of God Antonia d'Astonac, who had a vision of St. Michael. He told Antonia to honor him by nine salutations to the nine Choirs of Angels. St. Michael promised that whoever would practice this devotion in his honor would have, when approaching Holy Communion, an escort of nine angels chosen from each of the nine Choirs. In addition, for those who would recite the Chaplet daily, he promised his continual assistance and that of all the holy angels during life.

**☉ God, come to my assistance. ☉ Lord, make haste to help me.
Glory be to the Father, etc.**

(Say one Our Father and three Hail Marys after each of the following nine salutations in honor of the nine Choirs of Angels)

1. **By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Seraphim may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. Amen.**
2. **By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Cherubim may the Lord grant us the grace to leave the ways of sin and run in the paths of Christian perfection. Amen.**
3. **By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Thrones may the Lord infuse into our hearts a true and sincere spirit of humility. Amen.**
4. **By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Dominions may the Lord give us grace to govern our senses and overcome any unruly passions. Amen.**
5. **By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Powers may the Lord protect our souls against the snares and temptations of the devil. Amen.**

6. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Virtues may the Lord preserve us from evil and falling into temptation. Amen.
7. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Principalities may God fill our souls with a true spirit of obedience. Amen.
8. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Archangels may the Lord give us perseverance in faith and in all good works in order that we may attain the glory of Heaven. Amen.
9. By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Angels may the Lord grant us to be protected by them in this mortal life and conducted in the life to come to Heaven. Amen.

(Say one Our Father in honor of each of the following leading Angels: St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael and our Guardian Angel.)

Concluding prayers

O glorious prince St. Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King and our admirable conductor, you who shine with excellence and superhuman virtue deliver us from all evil, who turn to you with confidence and enable us by your gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day.

Pray for us, O glorious St. Michael, Prince of the Church of Jesus Christ, that we may be made worthy of His promises.

Almighty and Everlasting God, Who, by a prodigy of goodness and a merciful desire for the salvation of all men, has appointed the most glorious Archangel St. Michael Prince of Your Church, make us worthy, we ask You, to be delivered from all our enemies, that none of them may harass us at the hour of death, but that we may be conducted by him into Your Presence. This we ask through the merits of Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Icon of the Guardian Angel



“See that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.”

—*Matthew 18:10*

“How great the dignity of the soul, since each one has from his birth an angel commissioned to guard it.”

— *(Saint Jerome in his commentary on Matthew)*

“Behold I will send my angel, who shall go before you, and guard you in your journey, and bring you into the place that I have prepared . . .”

—*Exodus 23:20-22*

“For he has given his angels charge over you; to guard you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up: lest you dash your foot against a stone.”

—*Psalms 91:11-12*

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?”

—*Hebrews 1:14*

“The existence of the spiritual, non-corporeal beings that Sacred Scripture usually calls ‘angels’ is a truth of faith. The witness of Scripture is as clear as the unanimity of tradition.” —*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 328

The concept of each soul having a personal guardian angel, is also an ancient one, and long accepted by the Church:

1. What Are Angels?

St. Augustine (354-430) instructs us that the word “angel” is the name of their office, not of their nature. Their nature is known as “spirit.” The word “angel,” as translated from the Greek, means “one going,” “one sent” or “messenger.” St. Augustine adds that “the spirits called angels were never, in any sense, at any time, partakers of darkness, but from the moment of their creation, they were made beings of light. They were not merely created in order to exist and to live, but they were also illumined, so that they might live in wisdom and happiness.” According to St. Bernard (1090-1153) in his *De Consideratione*, angels are mighty, glorious, blessed, distinct personalities, of graduated rank, occupying the order given them from the beginning, perfect of their kind . . . endowed with immortality, passionless . . . being of pure mind, benignant affections, religious and devout; of unblemished morality; inseparably one in heart and mind, blessed with unbroken peace, God’s edifice dedicated to the divine praises and service. All this we ascertain by reading, and hold by faith. According to Fr. Pascal P. Parente, “Even though not yet an article of faith, it is Catholic doctrine that the Angels are pure spirits, incorporeal substances, free and independent from any material body . . .”

As to their “form,” we accept the descriptions of Scripture and Tradition and the revelations of the Saints which reveal that when they appear on earth, angels have a form similar to that of men, but of an ethereal, spiritual nature. At least that is how they appear in various apparitions in both the Old and New Testaments and in the apparitions of saints.

St. John Damascene (c. 675-c. 749), a Doctor of the Church, writes: “An angel is an intellectual substance, endowed with liberty, perpetually active, without a body, serving God, having the form and the limits of whose substance only its Creator knows.” We believe that each angel is a distinct being, an individual, having distinct features (as we will learn from the revelations of the Saints), who has his own place in a hierarchy and who has an intellect far superior to human intellect. This is manifest in their many apparitions. Agreeing is St. Thomas Aquinas, who maintains that the Angels differ from each other specifically.

2. How Do We Know that Angels Exist?

The answer can be briefly summarized in this manner: we know that angels exist from the teaching of the Church, which is based both on Sacred Scripture—the

Old and the New Testaments—and on Tradition, from the unanimous teachings of the Saints and Doctors of the Church, and from the innumerable well-authenticated accounts of apparitions. That the Angels were created was defined by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215). The decree “Firmiter” against the Albigenian heresy declared both the fact that they were created and that men were created after them. Given free will and a high intelligence at their creation, they are often called the “sons of God.”

In the Bible, angels are represented as a large gathering of spiritual beings intermediate between God and men. Angels are the servants and messengers of God, doing all as God pleases, serving the accomplishment of the divine plan. As St. Paul cites in his letter to the Hebrews: “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?” (Heb. 1:14). In addition, there are angels who minister not only to man, but principally to God Himself. In the book of Daniel, the Prophet tells of a vision of angels: “. . . thousands of thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him.” (Dan. 7:10). Our Lord Himself reveals the following: “See that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.” (Matt. 18:10).

The first great wealth of information regarding angels is given us in both the Old and New Testaments, as well as through the teachings of Holy Mother Church. Tradition has handed down from the earliest days important truths regarding them, while numerous Doctors of the Church have enlightened us on this doctrine. But probably the greatest wealth of information has been given us by the saints who have been privileged to view them and sometimes to communicate with them in wonderful visions that have been recorded for our edification. Before we consider these wonderful visions we will first consider the testimony about the Angels as given in the Old Testament.

3. Angels in the Old Testament

Of the forty-six books of the Old Testament, angels are mentioned in thirty-one. In these books we learn about the activities of the Angels as they are directed by God. They adore, rebuke, reprove, comfort, instruct, chastise, prophesy, destroy, protect, assist, guard, interpret, advise, announce births, locate the lost and deliver messages of God; they also intercede and pray for us, they afflict, punish and even kill. We are reminded of the following well-known activities of angels: When Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden for their sin, God “placed before the paradise of pleasure cherubims, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” (Gen. 3:24). Three angels visited Abraham, and when he saw them, “he ran to meet them from the door of his tent, and adored down to the ground.” After eating the meal that was prepared for them, they prophesied that Abraham’s wife Sara, even though well advanced in years, would nevertheless bear a son. (Gen. 18:2-14). The prophecy was fulfilled

when Sara gave birth to a son whom Abraham named Isaac. We learn later that Sara had a servant girl who ran away from her stern mistress, but “the angel of the Lord having found her, by a fountain of water in the wilderness . . . said to her: Return to thy mistress, and humble thyself under her hand.” (Gen. 16:7-9).

Yet another intervention of an angel took place when Abraham was about to slay his son for a holocaust, as instructed by God. While the knife was poised to strike, “. . . an angel of the Lord from heaven called to him, saying: Abraham, Abraham . . . Lay not thy hand upon the boy, neither do thou anything to him . . .” (Gen. 22:11-12). After Abraham, we learn that Lot and his wife, while entertaining two angels in their home, were warned by them about the destruction of Sodom: And when it was morning, the angels pressed him, saying: Arise, take thy wife, and the two daughters which thou hast: lest thou also perish in the wickedness of the city . . . And they brought him forth and set him without the city: and there they spoke to him, saying: Save thy life: look not back, neither stay thou in all the country about: but save thyself in the mountain, lest thou be also consumed . . . And his wife looking behind her, was turned into a statue of salt. (Gen. 19:15-17, 26).

When Moses was learning from God the laws that would be observed by the people, God assured him, “Behold I will send my angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared . . . If thou wilt hear his voice, and do all that I speak, I will be an enemy to thy enemies and will afflict them that afflict thee. And my angel shall go before thee . . .” (Ex. 23:20, 22-23). When Josue was in a field of the city of Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and saw a man holding a drawn sword. After the man answered that he was not an enemy but “prince of the host of the Lord,” Josue recognized him as an angel and “fell on his face to the ground.” The angel then said, “Loose thy shoes from off thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Josue did as was commanded him.” (Jos. 5:13-16). The Lord then announced that Josue could lay claim to the city of Jericho. (Jos. 6:2).

We read in 4 Kings (2 Kings) that Ezechias prayed for God’s help against his enemy, the Assyrians: “And it came to pass that night, that an angel of the Lord came, and slew in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and eighty-five thousand.” (4 Kgs. 19:35). The prophet Elias went one day’s journey into the desert and slept under a juniper tree. He was later awakened by an angel, who said to him, “Arise and eat.” Elias looked, “and behold there was at his head a hearth cake, and a vessel of water: and he ate and drank, and he fell asleep again.” For a second time the angel touched him and said, “Arise, eat: for thou hast yet a great way to go.” And Elias arose, ate and drank, “and walked in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights, unto the mount of God, Horeb.” (1 Kgs. 19:4-8).

When Nabuchodonosor had Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago cast into the burning furnace for not adoring a golden statue, they walked unharmed among the

flames; the angel of the Lord “drove the flame of the fire out of the furnace, and made the midst of the furnace like the blowing of a wind bringing dew, and the fire touched them not at all, nor troubled them, nor did them any harm.” The three young men sang the praises of God and prayed, “O ye angels of the Lord, bless the Lord: praise and exalt him above all forever.” (Dan. 3:49-50, 58).

In the book of Zacharias we are told about a vision in which the prophet saw four chariots driven by angels. The horses, “grisled and strong,” were black, white and red. An angel, who was his companion during the vision, informed Zacharias that they were the four winds of the heaven, “which go forth to stand before the Lord of all the earth.” (Zach. 6:1-5). The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that angels “closed the earthly paradise; protected Lot; saved Hagar and her child; stayed Abraham’s hand; communicated the law by their ministry; led the People of God; announced births and callings; and assisted the prophets, just to cite a few examples. Finally, the Angel Gabriel announced the birth of the Precursor and that of Jesus himself.”

4. Angels in the New Testament

In the entire New Testament, including the four Gospels, the Epistles and The Apocalypse, the words “angel” or “angels” are mentioned more than 158 times. From the Incarnation to the Ascension, we know that Our Lord was surrounded by the adoration and the service of angels. “Thinkest thou that I cannot ask my Father, and He will give me presently more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 26:53). Before His birth they advised Joseph to accept Mary as his wife; they warned him to take Mary and the Child to Egypt and announced when it was safe to return. At Our Lord’s birth they announced the good news to the shepherds; they served Him in the desert and in the Garden of Olives; they were present at His Resurrection. “For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it.” (Matt. 28:2). Angels will also be indispensable at the Lord’s Second Coming because Jesus tells us: “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then will he render to every man according to his works.” (Matt. 16:27). “The harvest is the end of the world. And the reapers are the angels.” (Matt. 13:39). “So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just.” (Matt. 13:49).

Angels continued to perform their services for the benefit of the Church and the Apostles, as noted in the Acts of the Apostles. An angel awakened Philip and instructed him: “Arise, go toward the south, to the way that goeth down from Jerusalem into Gaza.” Philip went immediately and met the eunuch of Ethiopia, who was reading the prophet Isaias. After explaining the book to him, Philip baptized the eunuch, and the eunuch “went on his way rejoicing.” (Acts 8:26-39). We learn of an angel’s visitation in the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, when the Apostles were cast into the common prison by the high priest. But that very night an angel opened the doors of the prison and, leading them out, said:

“Go, and standing speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.” (Acts 5:20). The next morning, when the high priest and the council had gathered, they gave orders for the Apostles to be brought to them for questioning. But when the ministers came to the prison, they found the cell empty. They reported: “The prison indeed we found shut with all diligence, and the keepers standing before the doors; but opening it, we found no man within.” (Acts 5:23). The Apostles were later found in the temple preaching. The devout Cornelius, a centurion and a Gentile, was visited by an angel who instructed him to send his servants to invite St. Peter to his home. When Peter arrived, Cornelius told him, “Four days ago unto this hour, I was praying in my house, at the ninth hour, and behold a man stood before me in white apparel and said, ‘Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thy alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.’ ” (Acts 10:30). Peter preached to him and those in the house and baptized them—the first Gentiles to be admitted into the Church. Next we find St. Peter again in prison, this time at the hands of King Herod. Perhaps the King had heard of his miraculous escape from prison when the high priest had him apprehended. This time the King took extra precautions that the Apostle would not escape and “delivered him to four files of soldiers to be kept.” (Acts 12:4). But one night while Peter slept between two soldiers, bound with two chains and with jailers before the door, an angel appeared in a great light. While the soldiers were in a mysterious slumber, the chains miraculously fell from the Apostle. Peter was told to dress, to put on his sandals and to follow the angelic apparition. “And passing through the first and the second ward, they came to the iron gate that leadeth to the city, which of itself opened to them. And going out, they passed on through one street: and immediately the angel departed from him.” (Acts 12:10).

The Apostle Paul also had an experience when he was aboard a ship, which was “being mightily tossed with the tempest.” (Acts 27:18). After many days, St. Paul spoke to the passengers and crew: “Now I exhort you to be of good cheer. For there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but only of the ship. For an angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, stood by me this night saying: ‘Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Caesar; and behold God hath given thee all of them that sail with thee.’ ” (Acts 27:22-24). After some days of difficulty the ship was run aground, and the stern “was broken with the violence of the sea.” (Acts 27:41). Just as the angel had predicted, all the “two hundred threescore and sixteen souls” were saved and only the ship was lost. (Acts 27:37-44). Angels are repeatedly mentioned in The Apocalypse written by St. John while at Patmos. In the Saint’s vision of things yet to come, we find the Angels adoring and ministering before the throne: “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne . . .” (Apoc. 5:11). “And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients, and the four living creatures; and they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God.” (Apoc. 7:11). In the events yet to come we also find angels dispensing God’s justice: “And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun having the sign of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four

angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth.” (Apoc. 7:2). “And the four angels were loosed, who were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year: for to kill the third part of men.” (Apoc. 9:15). “And I saw another sign in heaven, great and wonderful: seven angels having the seven last plagues. For in them is filled up the wrath of God.” (Apoc. 15:1). “And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels: Go, and pour out the seven vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.” (Apoc. 16:1). We learn too that angels are assigned to guard various places, especially in the New Jerusalem: “And it had a wall great and high, having twelve gates, and in the gates twelve angels . . .” (Apoc. 21:12). And finally, in the book of The Apocalypse, angels are mentioned in 13 of the 22 Chapters.

5. What the Church Teaches about Angels

The Church continues to benefit from angelic services, since angels are recognized in her prayers and rubrics. In the funeral liturgy we pray, “May the Angels lead you into Paradise.” The words of Gabriel are given in the Hail Mary, and the announcement is repeated in the Angelus, which the Church recites at 6 a.m., noon and 6 p.m. The Angels are appealed to for prayer at the beginning of Holy Mass in the words: “And I ask Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.” The Confiteor in the Traditional Roman Rite of the Mass invokes “Holy Michael the Archangel.” The Preface of Holy Mass also appeals to “all the choirs of Angels in Heaven” to join with us in praising God. And after the Consecration, we pray: “Almighty God, we pray that Your angel may take this sacrifice to Your altar in Heaven . . .” The Church has traditionally designated September 29 as the Feast of (the Dedication of the church of) St. Michael the Archangel. This feast has now been expanded to include St. Gabriel and St. Raphael also. In the traditional Roman calendar, May 8 commemorated “The Apparition of St. Michael the Archangel” at Monte Gargano in Apulia, Italy, in 492. The guardian angels are remembered on October 2. Besides these remembrances, there are also other prayers in which the Church mentions angels. In addition, there are novenas, chaplets, litanies, beloved hymns and prayers of the Saints. In an address given by Pope John Paul II on July 9, 1986, the Holy Father stated regarding angels: “All of the Church’s tradition is unanimous in affirming that they do exist. One would have to alter Sacred Scripture itself if one wished to eliminate this teaching . . . At certain points in salvation history, angels have had a fundamental role to play in the unfolding of human events.”

In the same year, on July 23, the Holy Father further instructed: The Angels are purely spiritual beings, created by God and given intelligence and free will. Through an immediate intuition of the truth, their intelligence grasps its object in a way that is much more complete than is possible for man . . . The world of the pure spirits is divided into good angels and bad ones. And this division has happened precisely as a result of their freedom to choose. God was present to their intelligence and free will as the Supreme Good. He also wished to give

them, through grace, a share in the mystery of His divinity. The good angels have chosen God. But the others . . . have turned against God and the revelation of His grace. Their decision was inspired by a false sense of self-sufficiency, and it emerges as hatred and rebellion against God. It is traditional Catholic teaching (though not a defined dogma) that each individual is given a guardian angel, who will accompany, guard and teach him throughout his life. After death this angel will accompany the soul to its judgment, visit it if it is detained in Purgatory, and accompany it to the glory of Heaven. (See #64-76.)

6. When Were the Angels Created?

St. Jerome, St. John Damascene, the Greek Fathers and many Doctors of the Church hold that the creation of the Angels took place previously to that of the corporeal world. Other theologians and Catholic writers believe that the Angels were created at the same time the world was created, although before the creation of man. This latter point was upheld by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, which stated: "God, by His almighty power, created together in the beginning of time both creatures, the spiritual and the corporeal, namely the angelic and the earthly, and afterwards the human, as it were an intermediate creature, composed of body and spirit." (D 428). Despite the opinions of those previously mentioned, the issue is still being debated among theologians and writers of religious material as to exactly when the Angels were created—before the heavens, the stars? But the common opinion of theologians is that the Angels and the material world were created at the same time. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) writes on this subject: "God alone, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is from eternity. Catholic Faith holds this without doubt, and everything to the contrary must be rejected as heretical. For God so produced creatures that He made them from nothing, that is, after there had been nothing."⁶ From this we know that there was a time when angels did not exist and that they were created in the beginning of time and before man was created. Exactly when they were created, whether before the earth and the skies, is known to God alone.

7. Before the Angelic Battle in Heaven, Were All the Angels Admitted to the Full Vision of God?

It is the belief of many theologians and Doctors of the Church that the Angels were all created in the state of grace in a heaven, but one separated from the Heaven of the Holy Trinity. The Angels had to give proof of their fidelity to God before being admitted to His presence. It was at this time that the bad angels rebelled. Had they seen the majesty and magnificence of God—the full impact of the Beatific Vision—they would never have entertained thoughts of being equal to or superior to God, nor would they have dared to be rebellious. After the fall of the angels—who then became devils—the good, faithful angels were admitted to the Heaven of the Holy Trinity, where they were permitted to gaze on the unveiled beauty of God. All of the above, as mentioned, is the belief of many theologians, and was also that of St. Thomas Aquinas, a Doctor of the Church.

The Saint writes that the faithful angels, since their entrance into the Heaven of the Trinity, could not and cannot now sin or rebel because they now see God “in His essence,” which he also calls “the union of beatitude.”

8. Has the Number of Angels Increased Since Their Creation?

It is the universal Catholic belief that after the battle in which the defeated angels were transformed into devils, the number of angels has remained the same. Their number was complete from that time to this.

The feast, celebrating the angels who helped bring us to God, began in many local calendars centuries ago, and was widely known by the 16th century. Pope Paul V placed a feast venerating the angels on the general calendar on 27 September 1608. Ferdinand of Austria requested that it be extended to all areas in the Holy Roman Empire. Initially placed after the feast of Michael the Archangel, it was seen as a kind of supplement to that date. Pope Clement X elevated the feast, celebrated 2 October, to an obligatory double for the whole Church. On 5 April 1883, Pope Leo XIII raised the feast to the rank of a double major.

Prayer to Your Angel Guardian

*Angel of God,
my Guardian dear,
to whom His love
commits me here,
ever this day
be at my side,
to light and guard,
to rule and guide.
Amen.*

Prayer to One's Guardian Angel

Dear Angel, in his goodness God gave you to me to guide, protect and enlighten me, and to bring me back to the right way when I go astray. Encourage me when I am disheartened, and instruct me when I err in my judgment. Help me to become more Christlike,

and so some day to be accepted into the company of Angels and Saints in heaven. Amen.

Prayer to Your Guardian Angel

*Guardian Angel from heaven so bright,
Watching beside me to lead me aright,
Fold your wings 'round me,
and guard me with love,
Softly sing songs to me
of heaven above.
Amen.*

Prayer Before Starting on a Journey

My holy Angel Guardian, ask the Lord to bless the journey which I undertake, that it may profit the health of my soul and body; that I may reach its end, and that, returning safe and sound, I may find my family in good health. Do thou guard, guide and preserve us. Amen.

Prayer to Holy Angels

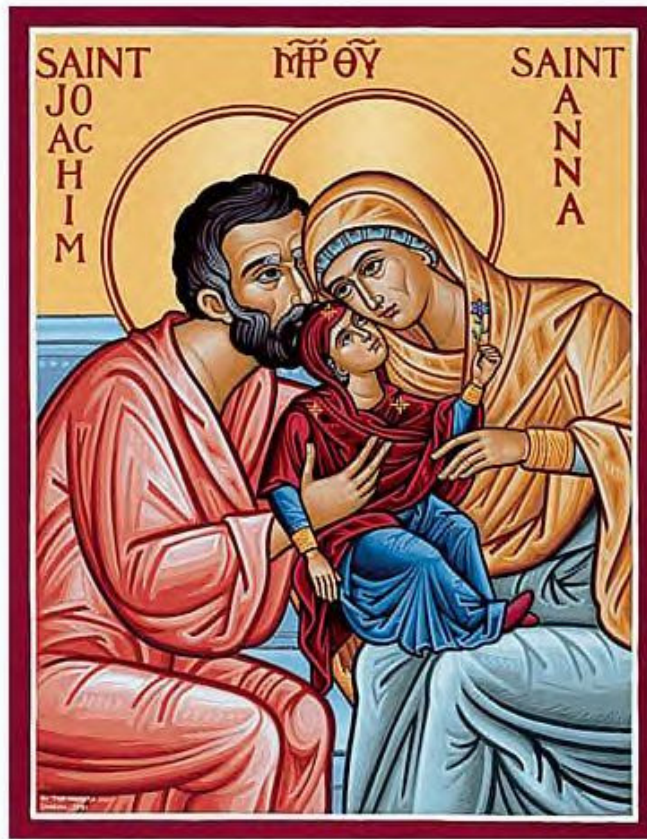
Bless the Lord, all you His angels. You who are mighty in strength and do His will, intercede for me at the throne of God. By your unceasing watchfulness protect me in every danger of soul and body. Obtain for me the grace of final perseverance, so that after this life I may be admitted to your glorious company and with you may sing the praises of God for all eternity.

All you holy angels and archangels, thrones and dominations, principalities and powers and virtues of

heaven, cherubim and seraphim, and especially you, my dear guardian angel, intercede for me and obtain for me the special favor I now ask {mention your petition}.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

**Icon of
Saint Joachim & Saint Anna
& the Infant Mary**



Joachim (whose name means *Yahweh prepares*), was the father of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Anne (Hebrew, *Hannah*, grace; also spelled *Ann*, *Anne*, *Anna*) is the traditional name of the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

If we were to obey the warning of St. Peter Damian, we should consider it a blameable and needless curiosity to inquire about those things that the Evangelists did not deem it advisable to relate, and, in particular, about the parents of the Blessed Virgin (Serm. iii de Nativ. B.M.V.). Tradition nevertheless, grounded on very old testimonies, very early hailed Saints Joachim and Anne as the father and mother of the Mother of God. True, this tradition seems to rest ultimately on the so-called "Gospel of James", the "Gospel of the Nativity of the Blessed Mary", and the Pseudo-Matthew, or "Book of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the Childhood of the Saviour"; and this origin is likely to rouse well-founded suspicions. It should be borne in mind, however, that the apocryphal character of these writings, that is to say, their rejection from the canon, and their unguineness do not imply that no heed whatever should be taken of some of their assertions; side by side, indeed, with unwarranted and legendary facts, they contain some historical data borrowed from reliable traditions or documents; and difficult though it is to distinguish in them the wheat

from the tares, it would be unwise and uncritical indiscriminately to reject the whole. Some commentators, who believe that the genealogy given by St. Luke is that of the Blessed Virgin, find the mention of Joachim in Heli (Luke, iii, 23; *Eliachim*, i.e. *Jeho-achim*), and explain that Joseph had, in the eyes of the law, become by his marriage the son of Joachim. That such is the purpose and the meaning of the Evangelist is very doubtful, and so is the identification proposed between the two names *Heli* and *Joachim*. Neither can it be asserted with certainty, in spite of the authority of the Bollandists, that Joachim was Heli's son and Joseph's brother; nor, as is sometimes affirmed, from sources of very doubtful value, that he had large possessions in herds and flocks. Much more interesting are the beautiful lines in which the "Gospel of James" describes how, in their old age, Joachim and Anne received the reward of their prayers to obtain issue. Tradition has it that the parents of the Blessed Virgin, who, apparently, first lived in Galilee, came later on to settle in Jerusalem; there the Blessed Virgin was born and reared; there also they died and were buried. A church, known at various epochs as St. Mary, St. Mary ubi nata est, St. Mary in Probatica, Holy Probatica, St. Anne, was built during the fourth century, possibly by St. Helena, on the site of the house of St. Joachim and St. Anne, and their tombs were there honoured until the close of the ninth century, when the church was converted into a Moslem school. The crypt which formerly contained the holy tombs was rediscovered on 18 March, 1889.

All our information concerning the names and lives of Sts. Joachim and Anne, the parents of Mary, is derived from apocryphal literature, the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and the *Protoevangelium* of James. Though the earliest form of the latter, on which directly or indirectly the other two seem to be based, goes back to about A.D. 150, we can hardly accept as beyond doubt its various statements on its sole authority. In the Orient the *Protoevangelium* had great authority and portions of it were read on the feasts of Mary by the Greeks, Syrians, Copts, and Arabians. In the Occident, however, it was rejected by the Fathers of the Church until its contents were incorporated by Jacobus de Voragine in his "Golden Legend" in the thirteenth century. From that time on the story of St. Anne spread over the West and was amply developed, until St. Anne became one of the most popular saints also of the Latin Church.

The *Protoevangelium* gives the following account: In Nazareth there lived a rich and pious couple, Joachim and Hannah. They were childless. When on a feast day Joachim presented himself to offer sacrifice in the temple, he was repulsed by a certain Ruben, under the pretext that men without offspring were unworthy to be admitted. Whereupon Joachim, bowed down with grief, did not return home, but went into the mountains to make his plaint to God in solitude. Also Hannah, having learned the reason of the prolonged absence of her husband, cried to the Lord to take away from her the curse of sterility, promising to dedicate her child to the service of God. Their prayers were heard; an angel came to Hannah and said: "Hannah, the Lord has looked upon thy tears; thou shalt conceive and give birth and the fruit of thy womb shall be blessed by all the

world". The angel made the same promise to Joachim, who returned to his wife. Hannah gave birth to a daughter whom she called Miriam (Mary). Since this story is apparently a reproduction of the biblical account of the conception of Samuel, whose mother was also called Hannah, even the name of the mother of Mary seems to be doubtful.

Her feast is celebrated in the East on the 25th day of July, which may be the day of the dedication of her first church at Constantinople or the anniversary of the arrival of her supposed relics in Constantinople (710). It is found in the oldest liturgical document of the Greek Church, the Calendar of Constantinople (first half of the eighth century). The Greeks keep a collective feast of St. Joachim and St. Anne on the 9th of September. In the Latin Church St. Anne was not venerated, except, perhaps, in the south of France, before the thirteenth century. Her picture, painted in the eighth century, which was found lately in the church of Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome, owes its origin to Byzantine influence. Her feast, under the influence of the "Golden Legend", is first found (26 July) in the thirteenth century, e.g. at Douai (in 1291), where a foot of St. Anne was venerated (feast of translation, 16 September). It was introduced in England by Urban VI, 21 November, 1378, from which time it spread all over the Western Church. It was extended to the universal Latin Church in 1584.

St. Joachim was honoured very early by the Greeks, who celebrate his feast on the day following the Blessed Virgin's birthday; the Latins were slow to admit it to their calendar, where it found place sometimes on 16 Sept. and sometimes on 9 Dec. Assigned by Julius II to 20 March, the solemnity was suppressed some fifty years later, restored by Gregory XV (1622), fixed by Clement XII (1738) on the Sunday after the Assumption, and finally raised to the rank of double of the second class by Leo XIII (1 Aug., 1879).

The supposed relics of St. Anne were brought from the Holy Land to Constantinople in 710 and were still kept there in the church of St. Sophia in 1333. The tradition of the church of Apt in southern France pretends that the body of St. Anne was brought to Apt by St. Lazarus, the friend of Christ, was hidden by St. Auspicius (d. 398), and found again during the reign of Charlemagne (feast, Monday after the octave of Easter); these relics were brought to a magnificent chapel in 1664 (feast, 4 May). The head of St. Anne was kept at Mainz up to 1510, when it was stolen and brought to Düren in Rheinland. St. Anne is the patroness of Brittany. Her miraculous picture (feast, 7 March) is venerated at Notre Dame d'Auray, Diocese of Vannes. Also in Canada, where she is the principal patron of the province of Quebec, the shrine of St. Anne de Beaupré is well known. St. Anne is patroness of women in labour; she is represented holding the Blessed Virgin Mary in her lap, who again carries on her arm the child Jesus. She is also patroness of miners, Christ being compared to gold, Mary to silver.

Prayer to Saint Anne

Good St. Anne, you were especially favored by God to be the mother of the most holy Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Savior. By your power with your most pure daughter and with her divine Son, kindly obtain for us the grace and the favor we now seek. Please secure for us also forgiveness of our past sins, the strength to perform faithfully our daily duties and the help we need to persevere in the love of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Joachim and Saint Anne

O blessed and happy pair, Joachim and Anne, to whom the Almighty gave for a daughter the Immaculate Virgin, the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, a grace which is a speaking evidence of your purity, and of your lives being perfectly ordered according to the will of God - oh, obtain for me grace, that I may serve God chastely. Procure also for an Christian parents the help of the Almighty, that they may bring up their children in piety, and thereby become worthy to partake of your happiness. Amen.

PRAYER TO SAINTS ANNE & JOACHIM Grandparents' Prayer

*Good Saint Ann and Saint Joachim,
parents of Mary and grandparents to Jesus,
be with me and all grandparents
that we may be wise and loving,*

*may share our time and stories and sense of humor,
and may enjoy and not spoil too much the grandchildren
who are close to our hearts,
for they are the sign of God's life to us.*

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
be with our grandchildren and all other grandchildren
that they may love and respect their grandparents
and all older people,
may remember to call,
visit or write,
and grow in wisdom,
age and grace before God.
Amen.*

DAILY PRAYER TO SAINTS ANNE & JOACHIM

*O glorious St. Ann and St. Joachim, you are filled with
compassion for those who invoke you and with love for those
who suffer! Heavily burdened with the weight of my
troubles, I cast myself at your feet and humbly beg of you to
take the present intention which I recommend to you in
your special care.*

*Please recommend it to your daughter, the Blessed Virgin
Mary, and place it before the throne of Jesus, so that He may
bring it to a happy issue. Continue to intercede for me until
my request is granted. But, above all, obtain for me the*

grace one day to see my God face to face, and with you and Mary and all the saints to praise and bless Him for all eternity. Amen.

Our Father, . . . Hail Mary . . .

O Jesus, Holy Mary, St. Anne and St. Joachim, help me now and at the hour of my death.

Good St. Anne, intercede for me.

Good St. Joachim, intercede for me.

FIRST DAY

Dear Saints. Anne and Joachim, though I am but a prodigal child, I appeal to you and place myself under your great motherly and fatherly care. Please listen to my prayers and grant my requests. See my contrite heart, and show me your unfailing goodness.

Deign to be my advocate and recommend me to God's infinite mercy. Obtain for me forgiveness of my sins and the strength to begin a new life that will last forever.

Blessed Saints Anne and Joachim, I also beg of you the grace to love, to serve, and to honor your daughter, the most holy Virgin Mary. Please recommend me to her and pray to her for me. She refuses none your requests but welcomes with loving kindness all those for whom you intercede.

Good Jesus, be merciful to the faithful servants of Your grandmother St. Ann and Your grandfather St. Joachim.

SECOND DAY

From the depths of my heart, good Saints Anne and Joachim, I offer you my homage this day and ask you to shelter me under the mantle of your motherly and fatherly care. You know, good mother and father, how much I love you, how gladly I serve you, how happy I am to praise you, how eager I am to call on you in time of distress.

Good Saints Anne and Joachim, be pleased to extend your helping hand in all my wants. Listen to my prayers, for I place my trust in your gracious bounty. Make all my thoughts and desires worthy and righteous.

Jesus, I thank You for all the graces which in Your infinite goodness You have lavished upon Saints. Anne and Joachim; for having chosen them, among all men and women, to be Your grandparents on earth and exalted her in heaven with such great and miraculous powers. In the name of their merits, I humbly recommend myself to Your infinite mercy.

THIRD DAY

Hail, good Saints Anne and Joachim, who first responded to the needs of Mary, Mother of our Savior and Queen of Angels. Hail to you who watched over her infancy, presented her to the Lord in the temple and, according to your promise, consecrated her to the service of God.

Hail Saints, Anne and Joachim, good parents! I rejoice in the marvels you continually perform, because they encourage all to seek your intercession.

Good Saints Anne and Joachim, by the great power that God has given you, show yourself my spiritual grandparents, my consolers, my advocates. Reconcile me to the God I have so deeply offended. Console me in my trials; strengthen me in my struggles. Deliver me from danger in my time of need. Help me at the hour of death and open to me the gates of paradise.

FOURTH DAY

Good Saints Anne and Joachim, you offered your pure and holy daughter Mary in the temple with faith, piety and love. By the happiness which then filled your heart, I beg you to present me to your Grandson Jesus. Offered by you, I will be agreeable in His sight.

Kind Saints Anne and Joachim, take me forever under your protection. Deliver me from the temptations which continually assail me. Above all, attend me in my last hour. As I lie on my deathbed, be present with your daughter to console and strengthen me.

Holy Mary and good Saints Anne and Joachim, watch over me and obtain for me the grace of a good death. When my soul goes forth, lead it to God's tribunal so that, by your powerful help and intercession, it may obtain a favorable judgment.

FIFTH DAY

Hail, all-humble servants of God and Grandparents of our Lord. By God's special favor, grant consolation to those who invoke you. Procure for them the eternal riches of heaven, and success in their temporal affairs as well.

Good Saints Anne and Joachim, obtain my deliverance from the punishment which my sins deserve. Obtain for me success in my temporal affairs; especially see to the salvation of my soul.

Saints Anne and Joachim, by your influence with Mary's son Jesus, you have won the gift of conversion for many sinners. Will you then abandon me, who have chosen you as my spiritual Grandparents? Your names alone, which signifies grace, assures me of the help of your prayers, and these prayers will surely procure pardon and mercy from Jesus. You will pray for me now and at the hour of my death.

SIX DAY

Good Saints Anne and Joachim, do not allow my soul, a masterpiece of God's creative power, to be lost forever. Free my heart of pride, vanity, self-love. May I know myself as I really am and learn meekness and simplicity of heart.

God's great love for me leaves me cold and unresponsive. I must reflect this love through works of mercy and charity toward my neighbor.

In your boundless charity, good Saints Anne and Joachim, help me to merit the glorious crown which is given to those who have fought the good fight against the world, the devil and the flesh. Assist me to preserve purity of heart and body. With Mary and her divine Son, protect me always.

SEVENTH DAY

Once again, Good Saints Anne and Joachim, I choose you for my advocates before the throne of God. By the power and grace that God has placed in you, extend to me your helping hand. Renew my mind and my heart.

Dear Saints Anne and Joachim, I have unbounded confidence in your prayers. To your blessed hands I entrust my soul, my body and all my hopes for this world and the next. Direct my actions according to your goodness and wisdom. I place myself under your loving care.

Receive me, good Anne and Joachim. Cover me with the mantle of your love. Look kindly on me. By your powerful intercession, may I obtain from God grace and mercy. Obtain for me remission for sin and release from the punishment my offenses have deserved. Pray that I may receive grace to lead a devout life on earth and that I may obtain the everlasting reward of heaven.

EIGHTH DAY

Hail, Saints Anne and Joachim! I rejoice at your exalted glory. You gave life to Mary, whose divine Son brought salvation to our lost world by conquering death and restoring life and hope to sinners. Pray to Him who, for love of us, clothed Himself with human flesh in the chaste womb of your daughter.

Glorious Saints Anne and Joachim, with your blessed daughter, deliver me from everything that is displeasing in the sight of God. Pray to your gentle and powerful Grandson that He may cleanse my soul in His precious blood, that He may send His Holy Spirit to enlighten and direct me in all that I do, always obedient to His holy inspirations.

Good Joachim and Anne, keep a watchful eye on me. Help me bear all my crosses. Give me the fullness of your bounty and sustain me with courage.

NINTH DAY

Good Saints Anne and Joachim, I have reached the end of this novena in your honor. I have asked and ask again. Good Grandparents of our Lord, let not your kind ear grow weary of my prayers, though I repeat them so often.

Bounteous Couple, implore for me from divine Providence all the help I need through life. May your generous hands bestow on me the material means to satisfy my own needs and to alleviate the plight of the poor.

Good Saints Joachim and Anne, fortify me by the sacraments of the Church at the hour of my death. Admit me into the company of the blessed in the kingdom of heaven, where I may praise and thank the adorable Trinity, your grandson Christ Jesus, and venerate your glorious daughter Mary, and yourselves dear Saints Anne and Joachim, through endless ages.

A PRAYER TO SAINTS ANNE AND JOACHIM

*Good parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
grandparents of our Savior, Jesus Christ,*

*When life seems barren,
help us to trust in God's mercy.*

*When we are confused,
help us to find the way to God.*

*When we are lost in the desert,
lead us to those whom God has called us to love.*

*When our marriage seems lifeless,
show us the eternal youth of the Lord.*

*When we are selfish,
teach us to cling only to that which lasts.*

When we are afraid, help us to trust in God.

*When we are ashamed,
remind us that we are God's children.
When we sin, lead us to do God's will.*

*You who know God's will for husband and wife,
help us to live chastely.*

*You who know God's will for the family,
keep all families close to you.*

*You who suffered without children,
intercede for all infertile couples.*

*You who trusted in God's will,
help us to respect God's gift of fertility.*

*You who gave birth to the Blessed Mother,
inspire couples to be co-creators with God.*

*You who taught the Mother of God,
teach us to nurture children in holy instruction.*

*You whose hearts trusted in God, hear our prayers for ...
(mention your requests here).*

Pray with us for the ministry of Catholic family life.

Pray with us for the ministry of Natural Family Planning.

*Pray with us for all who give their time,
talent and treasure to this good work.*

Hail Mary... Our Father... Glory be...

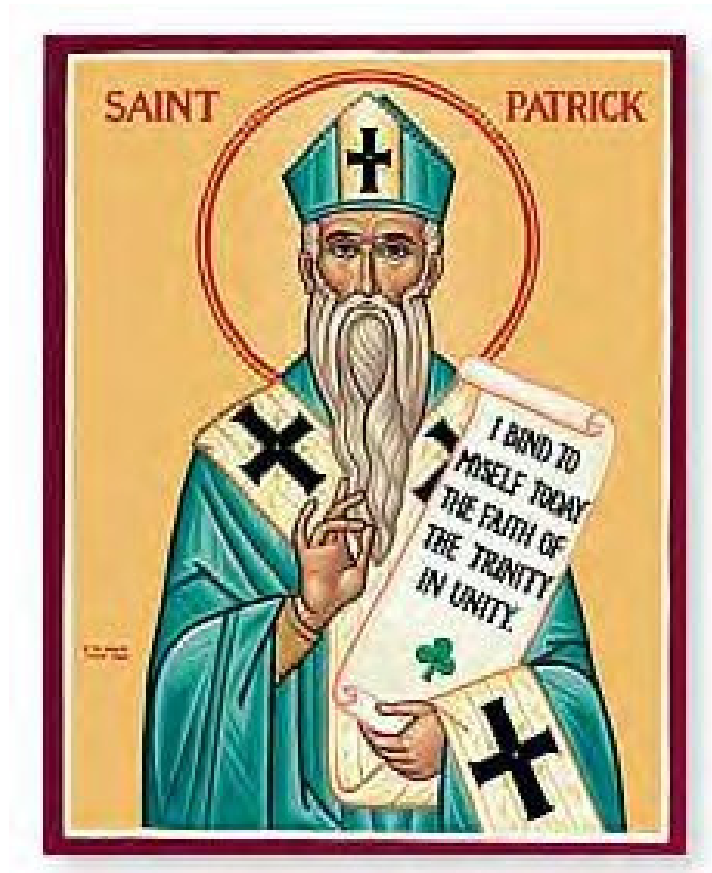
*God of our fathers, you gave Saints Anne and Joachim
the privilege of being the parents of Mary,
the mother of your incarnate Son.*

*May their prayers help us to attain the salvation
you have promised to your people.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Icon of Saint Patrick of Ireland



Saint Patrick appears in medieval episcopal vestments of Irish green, yet his heraldic color is blue. The scroll quotes his words on the Trinity from his famous *Lorica*, and is adorned with a shamrock, a symbol of the Trinity and the national emblem of Ireland.

Apostle of Ireland, born at Kilpatrick, near Dumbarton, in Scotland, in the year 387; died at Saul, Downpatrick, Ireland, 17 March, 493. [*Editor's Note:* Other sources say 460 or 461.]

He had for his parents Calphurnius and Conchessa. The former belonged to a Roman family of high rank and held the office of *decurio* in Gaul or Britain. Conchessa was a near relative of the great patron of Gaul, St. Martin of Tours. Kilpatrick still retains many memorials of Saint Patrick, and frequent pilgrimages continued far into the Middle Ages to perpetuate there the fame of his sanctity and miracles.

In his sixteenth year, Patrick was carried off into captivity by Irish marauders and was sold as a slave to a chieftan named Milchu in Dalriada, a territory of the present county of Antrim in Ireland, where for six years he tended his master's flocks in the valley of the Braid and on the slopes of Slemish, near the modern town of Ballymena. He relates in his "Confessio" that during his captivity while tending the flocks he prayed many times in the day: "the love of God", he added,

and His fear increased in me more and more, and the faith grew in me, and the spirit was roused, so that, in a single day, I have said as many as a hundred prayers, and in the night nearly the same, so that whilst in the woods and on the mountain, even before the dawn, I was roused to prayer and felt no hurt from it, whether there was snow or ice or rain; nor was there any slothfulness in me, such as I see now, because the spirit was then fervent within me.

In the ways of a benign Providence the six years of Patrick's captivity became a remote preparation for his future apostolate. He acquired a perfect knowledge of the Celtic tongue in which he would one day announce the glad tidings of Redemption, and, as his master Milchu was a druidical high priest, he became familiar with all the details of Druidism from whose bondage he was destined to liberate the Irish race.

Admonished by an angel he after six years fled from his cruel master and bent his steps towards the west. He relates in his "Confessio" that he had to travel about 200 miles; and his journey was probably towards Killala Bay and onwards thence to Westport. He found a ship ready to set sail and after some rebuffs was allowed on board. In a few days he was among his friends once more in Britain, but now his heart was set on devoting himself to the service of God in the sacred ministry. We meet with him at St. Martin's monastery at Tours, and again at the island sanctuary of Lérins which was just then acquiring widespread renown for learning and piety; and wherever lessons of heroic perfection in the exercise of Christian life could be acquired, thither the fervent Patrick was sure to bend his steps. No sooner had St. Germain entered on his great mission at Auxerre than Patrick put himself under his guidance, and it was at that great bishop's hands that Ireland's future apostle was a few years later promoted to the priesthood. It is the tradition in the territory of the Morini that Patrick under St. Germain's guidance for some years was engaged in missionary work among them. When Germain commissioned by the Holy See proceeded to Britain to combat the erroneous teachings of Pelagius, he chose Patrick to be one of his missionary companions and thus it was his privilege to be associated with the representative of Rome in the triumphs that ensued over heresy and Paganism, and in the many remarkable events of the expedition, such as the miraculous calming of the tempest at sea, the visit to the relics at St. Alban's shrine, and the Alleluia victory. Amid all these scenes, however, Patrick's thoughts turned towards Ireland, and from time to time he was favoured with visions of the children from Focluth, by the Western sea, who cried to him: "O holy youth, come back to Erin, and walk once more amongst us."

Pope St. Celestine I, who rendered immortal service to the Church by the overthrow of the Pelagian and Nestorian heresies, and by the imperishable wreath of honour decreed to the Blessed Virgin in the General Council of Ephesus, crowned his pontificate by an act of the most far-reaching consequences for the spread of Christianity and civilization, when he entrusted St. Patrick with the mission of gathering the Irish race into the one fold of Christ. Palladius (q.v.) had already received that commission, but terrified by the fierce opposition of a Wicklow chieftain had abandoned the sacred enterprise. It was St. Germain, Bishop of Auxerre, who commended Patrick to the pope. The writer of St. Germain's Life in the ninth century, Heric of Auxerre, thus attests this important fact: "Since the glory of the father shines in the training of the children, of the many sons in Christ whom St. Germain is believed to have had as disciples in religion, let it suffice to make mention here, very briefly, of one most famous, Patrick, the special Apostle of the Irish nation, as the record of his work proves. Subject to that most holy discipleship for 18 years, he drank in no little knowledge in Holy Scripture from the stream of so great a well-spring. Germain sent him, accompanied by Segetius, his priest, to Celestine, Pope of Rome, approved of by whose judgement, supported by whose authority, and strengthened by whose blessing, he went on his way to Ireland." It was only shortly before his death that Celestine gave this mission to Ireland's apostle and on that occasion bestowed on him many relics and other spiritual gifts, and gave him the name "Patercius" or "Patritius", not as an honorary title, but as a foreshadowing of the fruitfulness and merit of his apostolate whereby he became *pater civium* (the father of his people). Patrick on his return journey from Rome received at Ivrea the tidings of the death of Palladius, and turning aside to the neighboring city of Turin received episcopal consecration at the hands of its great bishop, St. Maximus, and thence hastened on to Auxerre to make under the guidance of St. Germain due preparations for the Irish mission.

It was probably in the summer months of the year 433, that Patrick and his companions landed at the mouth of the Ventry River close by Wicklow Head. The Druids were at once in arms against him. But Patrick was not disheartened. The intrepid missionary resolved to search out a more friendly territory in which to enter on his mission. First of all, however, he would proceed towards Dalriada, where he had been a slave, to pay the price of ransom to his former master, and in exchange for the servitude and cruelty endured at his hands to impart to him the blessings and freedom of God's children. He rested for some days at the islands off the Skerries coast, one of which still retains the name of Inis-Patrick, and he probably visited the adjoining mainland, which in olden times was known as Holm Patrick. Tradition fondly points out the impression of St. Patrick's foot upon the hard rock -- off the main shore, at the entrance to Skerries harbour. Continuing his course northwards he halted at the mouth of the River Boyne. A number of the natives there gathered around him and heard with joy in their own sweet tongue the glad tidings of Redemption. There too he performed his first miracle on Irish soil to confirm the honour due to the Blessed Virgin, and the Divine birth of our Saviour. Leaving one of his companions to continue the work

of instruction so auspiciously begun, he hastened forward to Strangford Lough and there quitting his boat continued his journey over land towards Slemish. He had not proceeded far when a chieftain, named Dichu, appeared on the scene to prevent his further advance. He drew his sword to smite the saint, but his arm became rigid as a statue and continued so until he declared himself obedient to Patrick. Overcome by the saint's meekness and miracles, Dichu asked for instruction and made a gift of a large *sabhall* (barn), in which the sacred mysteries were offered up. This was the first sanctuary dedicated by St. Patrick in Erin. It became in later years a chosen retreat of the saint. A monastery and church were erected there, and the hallowed site retains the name Sabhall (pronounced Saul) to the present day. Continuing his journey towards Slemish, the saint was struck with horror on seeing at a distance the fort of his old master Milchu enveloped in flames. The fame of Patrick's marvelous power of miracles preceded him. Milchu, in a fit of frenzy, gathered his treasures into his mansion and setting it on fire, cast himself into the flames. An ancient record adds: "His pride could not endure the thought of being vanquished by his former slave".

Returning to Saul, St. Patrick learned from Dichu that the chieftains of Erin had been summoned to celebrate a special feast at Tara by Leoghaire, who was the Ard-Righ, that is, the Supreme Monarch of Ireland. This was an opportunity which Patrick would not forego; he would present himself before the assembly, to strike a decisive blow against the Druidism that held the nation captive, and to secure freedom for the glad tidings of Redemption of which he was the herald. As he journeyed on he rested for some days at the house of a chieftain named Secsnen, who with his household joyfully embraced the Faith. The youthful Benen, or Benignus, son of the chief, was in a special way captivated by the Gospel doctrines and the meekness of Patrick. Whilst the saint slumbered he would gather sweet-scented flowers and scatter them over his bosom, and when Patrick was setting out, continuing his journey towards Tara, Benen clung to his feet declaring that nothing would sever him from him. "Allow him to have his way", said St. Patrick to the chieftain, "he shall be heir to my sacred mission." Thenceforth Benen was the inseparable companion of the saint, and the prophecy was fulfilled, for Benen is named among the "comhards" or successors of St. Patrick in Armagh. It was on 26 March, Easter Sunday, in 433, that the eventful assembly was to meet at Tara, and the decree went forth that from the preceeding day the fires throughout the kingdom should be extinguished until the signal blaze was kindled at the royal mansion. The chiefs and Brehons came in full numbers and the druids too would muster all their strength to bid defiance to the herald of good tidings and to secure the hold of their superstition on the Celtic race, for their demoniac oracles had announced that the messenger of Christ had come to Erin. St. Patrick arrived at the hill of Slane, at the opposite extremity of the valley from Tara, on Easter Eve, in that year the feast of the Annunciation, and on the summit of the hill kindled the Paschal fire. The druids at once raised their voice. "O King", (they said) "live for ever; this fire, which has been lighted in defiance of the royal edict, will blaze for ever in this land unless it be this very night extinguished." By order of the king and the agency of the druids, repeated

attempts were made to extinguish the blessed fire and to punish with death the intruder who had disobeyed the royal command. But the fire was not extinguished and Patrick shielded by the Divine power came unscathed from their snares and assaults. On Easter Day the missionary band having at their head the youth Benignus bearing aloft a copy of the Gospels, and followed by St. Patrick who with mitre and crozier was arrayed in full episcopal attire, proceeded in processional order to Tara. The druids and magicians put forth all their strength and employed all their incantations to maintain their sway over the Irish race, but the prayer and faith of Patrick achieved a glorious triumph. The druids by their incantations overspread the hill and surrounding plain with a cloud of worse than Egyptian darkness. Patrick defied them to remove that cloud, and when all their efforts were made in vain, at his prayer the sun sent forth its rays and the brightest sunshine lit up the scene. Again by demoniac power the Arch-Druid Lochru, like Simon Magus of old, was lifted up high in the air, but when Patrick knelt in prayer the druid from his flight was dashed to pieces upon a rock. Thus was the final blow given to paganism in the presence of all the assembled chieftains. It was, indeed, a momentous day for the Irish race. Twice Patrick pleaded for the Faith before Leoghaire. The king had given orders that no sign of respect was to be extended to the strangers, but at the first meeting the youthful Erc, a royal page, arose to show him reverence; and at the second, when all the chieftains were assembled, the chief-bard Dubhtach showed the same honour to the saint. Both these heroic men became fervent disciples of the Faith and bright ornaments of the Irish Church. It was on this second solemn occasion that St. Patrick is said to have plucked a shamrock from the sward, to explain by its triple leaf and single stem, in some rough way, to the assembled chieftains, the great doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. On that bright Easter Day, the triumph of religion at Tara was complete. The Ard-Righ granted permission to Patrick to preach the Faith throughout the length and breadth of Erin, and the druidical prophecy like the words of Balaam of old would be fulfilled: the sacred fire now kindled by the saint would never be extinguished.

The beautiful prayer of St. Patrick, popularly known as "St. Patrick's Breast-Plate", is supposed to have been composed by him in preparation for this victory over Paganism. The following is a literal translation from the old Irish text:

Lorica

I bind to myself today

The strong virtue of the Invocation of the Trinity:

I believe the Trinity in the Unity

The Creator of the Universe.

I bind to myself today

The virtue of the Incarnation of Christ with His

Baptism,

The virtue of His crucifixion with His burial,

The virtue of His Resurrection with His Ascension,

The virtue of His coming on the Judgment Day.

I bind to myself today

The virtue of the love of seraphim,

In the obedience of angels,

In the hope of resurrection unto reward,

In prayers of Patriarchs,

In predictions of Prophets,

In preaching of Apostles,

In faith of Confessors,

In purity of holy Virgins,

In deeds of righteous men.

I bind to myself today

The power of Heaven,

The light of the sun,

The brightness of the moon,

The splendour of fire,

The flashing of lightning,

The swiftness of wind,

The depth of sea,

The stability of earth,

The compactness of rocks.

I bind to myself today

God's Power to guide me,

God's Might to uphold me,

God's Wisdom to teach me,

God's Eye to watch over me,

God's Ear to hear me,

God's Word to give me speech,

God's Hand to guide me,
God's Way to lie before me,
God's Shield to shelter me,
God's Host to secure me,
Against the snares of demons,
Against the seductions of vices,
Against the lusts of nature,
Against everyone who meditates injury to me,
Whether far or near,
Whether few or with many.

I invoke today all these virtues
Against every hostile merciless power
Which may assail my body and my soul,
Against the incantations of false prophets,
Against the black laws of heathenism,
Against the false laws of heresy,
Against the deceits of idolatry,
Against the spells of women, and smiths, and druids,
Against every knowledge that binds the soul of man.

Christ, protect me today
Against every poison, against burning,
Against drowning, against death-wound,
That I may receive abundant reward.

Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right, Christ at my left,
Christ in the fort,
Christ in the chariot seat,
Christ in the poop [deck],
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,

**Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks to me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.**

**I bind to myself today
The strong virtue of an invocation of the Trinity,
I believe the Trinity in the Unity
The Creator of the Universe.**

St. Patrick (ca. 377)

St. Patrick remained during Easter week at Slane and Tara, unfolding to those around him the lessons of Divine truth. Meanwhile the national games were being celebrated a few miles distant at Tailten (now Telltown) in connection with the royal feast. St. Patrick proceeding thither solemnly administered baptism to Conall, brother of the Ard-Righ Leoghaire, on Wednesday, 5 April. Benen and others had already been privately gathered into the fold of Christ, but this was the first public administering of baptism, recognized by royal edict, and hence in the ancient Irish Kalendars to the fifth of April is assigned "the beginning of the Baptism of Erin". This first Christian royal chieftain made a gift to Patrick of a site for a church which to the present day retains the name of Donagh-Patrick. The blessing of heaven was with Conall's family. St. Columba is reckoned among his descendants, and many of the kings of Ireland until the eleventh century were of his race. St. Patrick left some of his companions to carry on the work of evangelization in Meath, thus so auspiciously begun. He would himself visit the other territories. Some of the chieftains who had come to Tara were from Focluth, in the neighbourhood of Killala, in Connaught, and as it was the children of Focluth who in vision had summoned him to return to Ireland, he resolved to accompany those chieftains on their return, that thus the district of Focluth would be among the first to receive the glad tidings of Redemption. It affords a convincing proof of the difficulties that St. Patrick had to overcome, that though full liberty to preach the Faith throughout Erin was granted by the monarch of Leoghaire, nevertheless, in order to procure a safe conduct through the intervening territories whilst proceeding towards Connaught he had to pay the price of fifteen slaves. On his way thither, passing through Granard he learned that at Magh-Slecht, not far distant, a vast concourse was engaged in offering worship to the chief idol Crom-Cruach. It was a huge pillar-stone, covered with slabs of gold and silver, with a circle of twelve minor idols around it. He proceeded thither, and with his crosier smote the chief idol that crumbled to dust; the others fell to the ground. At Killala he found the whole people of the territory assembled. At his preaching, the king and his six sons, with 12,000 of the people, became docile to the Faith. He spent seven years visiting every district of Connaught, organizing parishes, forming dioceses, and instructing the chieftains and people. One the occasion of his first visit to Rathcroghan, the royal seat of the kings of Connaught, situated near Tulsk, in the County of Roscommon, a

remarkable incident occurred, recorded in many of the authentic narratives of the saint's life. Close by the clear fountain of Clebach, not far from the royal abode, Patrick and his venerable companions had pitched their tents and at early dawn were chanting the praises of the Most High, when the two daughters of the Irish monarch -- Ethne, the fair, and Fedelm, the ruddy -- came thither, as was their wont, to bathe. Astonished at the vision that presented itself to them, the royal maidens cried out: "Who are ye, and whence do ye come? Are ye phantoms, or fairies, or friendly mortals?" St. Patrick said to them: "It were better you would adore and worship the one true God, whom we announce to you, than that you would satisfy your curiosity by such vain questions." And then Ethne broke forth into the questions:

"Who is God?"

"And where is God?"

"Where is His dwelling?"

"Has He sons and daughters?"

"Is He rich in silver and gold?"

"Is He everlasting? is He beautiful?"

"Are His daughters dear and lovely to the men of this world?"

"Is He on the heavens or on earth?"

"In the sea, in rivers, in mountains, in valleys?"

"Make Him known to us. How is He to be

Saint of: snake bites, Ireland.

Icon of

Saint Francis of Assisi



Our portrait icon of Saint Francis depicts the saint with the two symbols that most characterize his life: the cross of sacrifice and the dove of divine peace. This icon of this well-loved saint is based upon an icon painted by a contemporary of St. Francis.

Founder of the Franciscan Order, born at Assisi in Umbria, in 1181 or 1182 -- the exact year is uncertain; died there, 3 October, 1226.

His father, Pietro Bernardone, was a wealthy Assisian cloth merchant. Of his mother, Pica, little is known, but she is said to have belonged to a noble family of Provence. Francis was one of several children. The legend that he was born in a stable dates from the fifteenth century only, and appears to have originated in the desire of certain writers to make his life resemble that of Christ. At baptism the saint received the name of Giovanni, which his father afterwards altered to Francesco, through fondness it would seem for France (and his mother who was of French origin), whither business had led him at the time of his son's birth. In any case, since the child was renamed in infancy, the change can hardly have had anything to do with his aptitude for learning French, as some have thought.

Francis received some elementary instruction from the priests of St. George's at Assisi, though he learned more perhaps in the school of the Troubadours, who were just then making for refinement in Italy. However this may be, he was not very studious, and his literary education remained incomplete. Although associated with his father in trade, he showed little liking for a merchant's career, and his parents seemed to have indulged his every whim. Thomas of Celano, his first biographer, speaks in very severe terms of Francis's youth. Certain it is that the saint's early life gave no presage of the golden years that were to come. No one loved pleasure more than Francis; he had a ready wit, sang merrily, delighted in fine clothes and showy display. Handsome, spirit filled, gallant, and courteous, he soon became the prime favourite among the young nobles of Assisi, the foremost in every feat of arms, the leader of the civil revels, the very king of frolic. But even at this time Francis showed an instinctive sympathy with the poor, and though he spent money lavishly, it still flowed in such channels as to attest a princely magnanimity of spirit.

When about twenty, Francis went out with the townsmen to fight the Perugians in one of the petty skirmishes so frequent at that time between the rival cities. The Assisians were defeated on this occasion, and Francis, being among those taken prisoners, was held captive for more than a year in Perugia. A low fever which he there contracted appears to have turned his thoughts to the things of eternity; at least the emptiness of the life he had been leading came to him during that long illness. With returning health, however, Francis's eagerness after glory reawakened and his fancy wandered in search of victories; at length he resolved to embrace a military career, and circumstances seemed to favour his aspirations. A knight of Assisi was about to join "the gentle count", Walter of Brienne, who was then in arms in the Neapolitan States against the emperor, and Francis arranged to accompany him. His biographers tell us that the night before Francis set forth he had a strange dream, in which he saw a vast hall hung with armour all marked with the Cross. "These", said a voice, "are for you and your soldiers." "I know I shall be a great prince", exclaimed Francis exultingly, as he started for Apulia. But a second illness arrested his course at Spoleto. There, we are told, Francis had another dream in which the same voice bade him turn back to Assisi. He did so at once. This was in 1205.

Although Francis still joined at times in the noisy revels of his former comrades, his changed demeanour plainly showed that his heart was no longer with them; a yearning for the life of the spirit had already possessed it. His companions twitted Francis on his absent-mindedness and asked if he were minded to be married. "Yes", he replied, "I am about to take a wife of surpassing fairness." She was no other than Lady Poverty whom Dante and Giotto have wedded to his name, and whom even now he had begun to love. After a short period of uncertainty he began to seek in prayer and solitude the answer to his call; he had already given up his elegant attire and wasteful ways. One day, while crossing the Umbrian plain on horseback, Francis unexpectedly drew near a poor leper. The sudden appearance of this repulsive object filled him with disgust and he instinctively

retreated, but presently controlling his natural aversion he dismounted, embraced the unfortunate man, and gave him all the money he had. About the same time Francis made a pilgrimage to Rome. Pained at the miserly offerings he saw at the tomb of St. Peter, he emptied his purse thereon. Then, as if to put his fastidious nature to the test, he exchanged clothes with a tattered mendicant and stood for the rest of the day fasting among the horde of beggars at the door of the basilica.

Not long after his return to Assisi, whilst Francis was praying before an ancient crucifix in the forsaken wayside chapel of St. Damian's below the town, he heard a voice saying: "Go, Francis, and repair my house, which as you see is falling into ruin." Taking this behest literally, as referring to the ruinous church wherein he knelt, Francis went to his father's shop, impulsively bundled together a load of coloured drapery, and mounting his horse hastened to Foligno, then a mart of some importance, and there sold both horse and stuff to procure the money needful for the restoration of St. Damian's. When, however, the poor priest who officiated there refused to receive the gold thus gotten, Francis flung it from him disdainfully. The elder Bernardone, a most tight and stingy man, was incensed beyond measure at his son's conduct, and Francis, to avert his father's wrath, hid himself in a cave near St. Damian's for a whole month. When he emerged from this place of concealment and returned to the town, emaciated with hunger and squalid with dirt, Francis was followed by a hooting rabble, pelted with mud and stones, and otherwise mocked as a madman. Finally, he was dragged home by his father, beaten, bound, and locked in a dark closet.

Freed by his mother during Bernardone's absence, Francis returned at once to St. Damian's, where he found a shelter with the officiating priest, but he was soon cited before the city consuls by his father. The latter, not content with having recovered the scattered gold from St. Damian's, sought also to force his son to forego his inheritance. This Francis was only too eager to do; he declared, however, that since he had entered the service of God he was no longer under civil jurisdiction. Having therefore been taken before the bishop, Francis stripped himself of the very clothes he wore, and gave them to his father, saying: "Hitherto I have called you my father on earth; henceforth I desire to say only 'Our Father who art in Heaven.'" Then and there, as Dante sings, were solemnized Francis's nuptials with his beloved spouse, the Lady Poverty, under which name, in the mystical language afterwards so familiar to him, he comprehended the total surrender of all worldly goods, honours, and privileges. And now Francis wandered forth into the hills behind Assisi, improvising hymns of praise as he went. "I am the herald of the great King", he declared in answer to some robbers, who thereupon despoiled him of all he had and threw him scornfully in a snow drift. Naked and half frozen, Francis crawled to a neighbouring monastery and there worked for a time as a scullion. At Gubbio, whither he went next, Francis obtained from a friend the cloak, girdle, and staff of a pilgrim as an alms. Returning to Assisi, he traversed the city begging stones for the restoration of St. Damian's. These he carried to the old chapel, set in place himself, and so at

length rebuilt it. In the same way Francis afterwards restored two other deserted chapels, St. Peter's, some distance from the city, and St. Mary of the Angels, in the plain below it, at a spot called the Porziuncola. Meantime he redoubled his zeal in works of charity, more especially in nursing the lepers.

On a certain morning in 1208, probably 24 February, Francis was hearing Mass in the chapel of St. Mary of the Angels, near which he had then built himself a hut; the Gospel of the day told how the disciples of Christ were to possess neither gold nor silver, nor scrip for their journey, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff, and that they were to exhort sinners to repentance and announce the Kingdom of God. Francis took these words as if spoken directly to himself, and so soon as Mass was over threw away the poor fragment left him of the world's goods, his shoes, cloak, pilgrim staff, and empty wallet. At last he had found his vocation. Having obtained a coarse woolen tunic of "beast colour", the dress then worn by the poorest Umbrian peasants, and tied it round him with a knotted rope, Francis went forth at once exhorting the people of the country-side to penance, brotherly love, and peace. The Assisians had already ceased to scoff at Francis; they now paused in wonderment; his example even drew others to him. Bernard of Quintavalle, a magnate of the town, was the first to join Francis, and he was soon followed by Peter of Cattaneo, a well-known canon of the cathedral. In true spirit of religious enthusiasm, Francis repaired to the church of St. Nicholas and sought to learn God's will in their regard by thrice opening at random the book of the Gospels on the altar. Each time it opened at passages where Christ told His disciples to leave all things and follow Him. "This shall be our rule of life", exclaimed Francis, and led his companions to the public square, where they forthwith gave away all their belongings to the poor. After this they procured rough habits like that of Francis, and built themselves small huts near his at the Porziuncola. A few days later Giles, afterwards the great ecstatic and sayer of "good words", became the third follower of Francis. The little band divided and went about, two and two, making such an impression by their words and behaviour that before long several other disciples grouped themselves round Francis eager to share his poverty, among them being Sabatinus, *vir bonus et justus*, Moricus, who had belonged to the Crucigeri, John of Capella, who afterwards fell away, Philip "the Long", and four others of whom we know only the names. When the number of his companions had increased to eleven, Francis found it expedient to draw up a written rule for them. This first rule, as it is called, of the Friars Minor has not come down to us in its original form, but it appears to have been very short and simple, a mere adaptation of the Gospel precepts already selected by Francis for the guidance of his first companions, and which he desired to practice in all their perfection. When this rule was ready the Penitents of Assisi, as Francis and his followers styled themselves, set out for Rome to seek the approval of the Holy See, although as yet no such approbation was obligatory. There are differing accounts of Francis's reception by Innocent III. It seems, however, that Guido, Bishop of Assisi, who was then in Rome, commended Francis to Cardinal John of St. Paul, and that at the instance of the latter, the pope recalled the saint whose first overtures he had, as it appears,

somewhat rudely rejected. Moreover, in spite of the sinister predictions of others in the Sacred College, who regarded the mode of life proposed by Francis as unsafe and impracticable, Innocent, moved it is said by a dream in which he beheld the Poor Man of Assisi upholding the tottering Lateran, gave a verbal sanction to the rule submitted by Francis and granted the saint and his companions leave to preach repentance everywhere. Before leaving Rome they all received the ecclesiastical tonsure, Francis himself being ordained deacon later on.

After their return to Assisi, the **Friars Minor** -- for thus Francis had named his brethren, either after the *minores*, or lower classes, as some think, or as others believe, with reference to the Gospel (Matthew 25:40-45), and as a perpetual reminder of their humility -- found shelter in a deserted hut at Rivo Torto in the plain below the city, but were forced to abandon this poor abode by a rough peasant who drove in his ass upon them. About 1211 they obtained a permanent foothold near Assisi, through the generosity of the Benedictines of Monte Subasio, who gave them the little chapel of St. Mary of the Angels or the Porziuncola. Adjoining this humble sanctuary, already dear to Francis, the first Franciscan convent was formed by the erection of a few small huts or cells of wattle, straw, and mud, and enclosed by a hedge. From this settlement, which became the cradle of the Franciscan Order (*Caput et Mater Ordinis*) and the central spot in the life of St. Francis, the Friars Minor went forth two by two exhorting the people of the surrounding country. Like children "careless of the day", they wandered from place to place singing in their joy, and calling themselves the Lord's minstrels. The wide world was their cloister; sleeping in haylofts, grottos, or church porches, they toiled with the labourers in the fields, and when none gave them work they would beg. In a short while Francis and his companions gained an immense influence, and men of different grades of life and ways of thought flocked to the order. Among the new recruits made about this time by Francis were the famous Three Companions, who afterwards wrote his life, namely: Angelus Tancredi, a noble cavalier; Leo, the saint's secretary and confessor; and Rufinus, a cousin of St. Clare; besides Juniper, "the renowned jester of the Lord".

During the Lent of 1212, a new joy, great as it was unexpected, came to Francis. Clare, a young heiress of Assisi, moved by the saint's preaching at the church of St. George, sought him out, and begged to be allowed to embrace the new manner of life he had founded. By his advice, Clare, who was then but eighteen, secretly left her father's house on the night following Palm Sunday, and with two companions went to the Porziuncola, where the friars met her in procession, carrying lighted torches. Then Francis, having cut off her hair, clothed her in the Minorite habit and thus received her to a life of poverty, penance, and seclusion. Clare stayed provisionally with some Benedictine nuns near Assisi, until Francis could provide a suitable retreat for her, and for St. Agnes, her sister, and the other pious maidens who had joined her. He eventually established them at St. Damian's, in a dwelling adjoining the chapel he had rebuilt with his own hands,

which was now given to the saint by the Benedictines as domicile for his spiritual daughters, and which thus became the first monastery of the Second Franciscan Order of Poor Ladies, now known as **Poor Clares**.

In the autumn of the same year (1212) Francis's burning desire for the conversion of the Saracens led him to embark for Syria, but having been shipwrecked on the coast of Slavonia, he had to return to Ancona. The following spring he devoted himself to evangelizing Central Italy. About this time (1213) Francis received from Count Orlando of Chiusi the mountain of La Verna, an isolated peak among the Tuscan Apennines, rising some 4000 feet above the valley of the Casentino, as a retreat, "especially favourable for contemplation", to which he might retire from time to time for prayer and rest. For Francis never altogether separated the contemplative from the active life, as the several hermitages associated with his memory, and the quaint regulations he wrote for those living in them bear witness. At one time, indeed, a strong desire to give himself wholly to a life of contemplation seems to have possessed the saint. During the next year (1214) Francis set out for Morocco, in another attempt to reach the infidels and, if needs be, to shed his blood for the Gospel, but while yet in Spain was overtaken by so severe an illness that he was compelled to turn back to Italy once more.

Authentic details are unfortunately lacking of Francis's journey to Spain and sojourn there. It probably took place in the winter of 1214-1215. After his return to Umbria he received several noble and learned men into his order, including his future biographer Thomas of Celano. The next eighteen months comprise, perhaps, the most obscure period of the saint's life. That he took part in the Lateran Council of 1215 may well be, but it is not certain; we know from Eccleston, however, that Francis was present at the death of Innocent III, which took place at Perugia, in July 1216. Shortly afterwards, i.e. very early in the pontificate of Honorius III, is placed the concession of the famous Porziuncola Indulgence. It is related that once, while Francis was praying at the Porziuncola, Christ appeared to him and offered him whatever favour he might desire. The salvation of souls was ever the burden of Francis's prayers, and wishing moreover, to make his beloved Porziuncola a sanctuary where many might be saved, he begged a plenary Indulgence for all who, having confessed their sins, should visit the little chapel. Our Lord acceded to this request on condition that the pope should ratify the Indulgence. Francis thereupon set out for Perugia, with Brother Masseo, to find Honorius III. The latter, notwithstanding some opposition from the Curia at such an unheard-of favour, granted the Indulgence, restricting it, however, to one day yearly. He subsequently fixed 2 August in perpetuity, as the day for gaining this Porziuncola Indulgence, commonly known in Italy as *il perdono d'Assisi*. Such is the traditional account. The fact that there is no record of this Indulgence in either the papal or diocesan archives and no allusion to it in the earliest biographies of Francis or other contemporary documents has led some writers to reject the whole story. This *argumentum ex silentio* has, however, been met by M. Paul Sabatier, who in his critical edition of the

"Tractatus de Indulgentia" of Fra Bartholi has adduced all the really credible evidence in its favour. But even those who regard the granting of this Indulgence as traditionally believed to be an established fact of history, admit that its early history is uncertain. (See PORTIUNCULA.)

The first general chapter of the Friars Minor was held in May, 1217, at Porziuncola, the order being divided into provinces, and an apportionment made of the Christian world into so many Franciscan missions. Tuscany, Lombardy, Provence, Spain, and Germany were assigned to five of Francis's principal followers; for himself the saint reserved France, and he actually set out for that kingdom, but on arriving at Florence, was dissuaded from going further by Cardinal Ugolino, who had been made protector of the order in 1216. He therefore sent in his stead Brother Pacificus, who in the world had been renowned as a poet, together with Brother Agnellus, who later on established the Friars Minor in England. Although success came indeed to Francis and his friars, with it came also opposition, and it was with a view to allaying any prejudices the Curia might have imbibed against their methods that Francis, at the instance of Cardinal Ugolino, went to Rome and preached before the pope and cardinals in the Lateran. This visit to the Eternal City, which took place 1217-18, was apparently the occasion of Francis's memorable meeting with St. Dominic. The year 1218 Francis devoted to missionary tours in Italy, which were a continual triumph for him. He usually preached out of doors, in the market-places, from church steps, from the walls of castle court-yards. Allured by the magic spell of his presence, admiring crowds, unused for the rest to anything like popular preaching in the vernacular, followed Francis from place to place hanging on his lips; church bells rang at his approach; processions of clergy and people advanced to meet him with music and singing; they brought the sick to him to bless and heal, and kissed the very ground on which he trod, and even sought to cut away pieces of his tunic. The extraordinary enthusiasm with which the saint was everywhere welcomed was equalled only by the immediate and visible result of his preaching. His exhortations of the people, for sermons they can hardly be called, short, homely, affectionate, and pathetic, touched even the hardest and most frivolous, and Francis became in sooth a very conqueror of souls. Thus it happened, on one occasion, while the saint was preaching at Camara, a small village near Assisi, that the whole congregation were so moved by his "words of spirit and life" that they presented themselves to him in a body and begged to be admitted into his order. It was to accede, so far as might be, to like requests that Francis devised his Third Order, as it is now called, of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance, which he intended as a sort of middle state between the world and the cloister for those who could not leave their home or desert their wonted avocations in order to enter either the First Order of Friars Minor or the Second Order of Poor Ladies. That Francis prescribed particular duties for these tertiaries is beyond question. They were not to carry arms, or take oaths, or engage in lawsuits, etc. It is also said that he drew up a formal rule for them, but it is clear that the rule, confirmed by Nicholas IV in 1289, does not, at least in the form in which it has come down to us, represent the original rule of the Brothers and

Sisters of Penance. In any event, it is customary to assign 1221 as the year of the foundation of this third order, but the date is not certain.

At the second general chapter (May, 1219) Francis, bent on realizing his project of evangelizing the infidels, assigned a separate mission to each of his foremost disciples, himself selecting the seat of war between the crusaders and the Saracens. With eleven companions, including Brother Illuminato and Peter of Cattaneo, Francis set sail from Ancona on 21 June, for Saint-Jean d'Acre, and he was present at the siege and taking of Damietta. After preaching there to the assembled Christian forces, Francis fearlessly passed over to the infidel camp, where he was taken prisoner and led before the sultan. According to the testimony of Jacques de Vitry, who was with the crusaders at Damietta, the sultan received Francis with courtesy, but beyond obtaining a promise from this ruler of more indulgent treatment for the Christian captives, the saint's preaching seems to have effected little. Before returning to Europe, the saint is believed to have visited Palestine and there obtained for the friars the foothold they still retain as guardians of the holy places. What is certain is that Francis was compelled to hasten back to Italy because of various troubles that had arisen there during his absence. News had reached him in the East that Matthew of Narni and Gregory of Naples, the two vicars-general whom he had left in charge of the order, had summoned a chapter which, among other innovations, sought to impose new fasts upon the friars, more severe than the rule required. Moreover, Cardinal Ugolino had conferred on the Poor Ladies a written rule which was practically that of the Benedictine nuns, and Brother Philip, whom Francis had charged with their interests, had accepted it. To make matters worse, John of Capella, one of the saint's first companions, had assembled a large number of lepers, both men and women, with a view to forming them into a new religious order, and had set out for Rome to seek approval for the rule he had drawn up for these unfortunates. Finally a rumour had been spread abroad that Francis was dead, so that when the saint returned to Italy with brother Elias - he appeared to have arrived at Venice in July, 1220 -- a general feeling of unrest prevailed among the friars. Apart from these difficulties, the order was then passing through a period of transition. It had become evident that the simple, familiar, and unceremonious ways which had marked the Franciscan movement at its beginning were gradually disappearing, and that the heroic poverty practiced by Francis and his companions at the outset became less easy as the friars with amazing rapidity increased in number. And this Francis could not help seeing on his return. Cardinal Ugolino had already undertaken the task "of reconciling inspirations so unstudied and so free with an order of things they had outgrown." This remarkable man, who afterwards ascended the papal throne as Gregory IX, was deeply attached to Francis, whom he venerated as a saint and also, some writers tell us, managed as an enthusiast. That Cardinal Ugolino had no small share in bringing Francis's lofty ideals "within range and compass" seems beyond dispute, and it is not difficult to recognize his hand in the important changes made in the organization of the order in the so-called Chapter of Mats. At this famous assembly, held at Porziuncola at Whitsuntide, 1220 or

1221 (there is seemingly much room for doubt as to the exact date and number of the early chapters), about 5000 friars are said to have been present, besides some 500 applicants for admission to the order. Huts of wattle and mud afforded shelter for this multitude. Francis had purposely made no provision for them, but the charity of the neighbouring towns supplied them with food, while knights and nobles waited upon them gladly. It was on this occasion that Francis, harassed no doubt and disheartened at the tendency betrayed by a large number of the friars to relax the rigours of the rule, according to the promptings of human prudence, and feeling, perhaps unfitted for a place which now called largely for organizing abilities, relinquished his position as general of the order in favour of Peter of Cattaneo. But the latter died in less than a year, being succeeded as vicar-general by the unhappy Brother Elias, who continued in that office until the death of Francis. The saint, meanwhile, during the few years that remained in him, sought to impress on the friars by the silent teaching of personal example of what sort he would fain have them to be. Already, while passing through Bologna on his return from the East, Francis had refused to enter the convent there because he had heard it called the "House of the Friars" and because a *studium* had been instituted there. He moreover bade all the friars, even those who were ill, quit it at once, and it was only some time after, when Cardinal Ugolino had publicly declared the house to be his own property, that Francis suffered his brethren to re-enter it. Yet strong and definite as the saint's convictions were, and determinedly as his line was taken, he was never a slave to a theory in regard to the observances of poverty or anything else; about him indeed, there was nothing narrow or fanatical. As for his attitude towards study, Francis desiderated for his friars only such theological knowledge as was conformable to the mission of the order, which was before all else a mission of example. Hence he regarded the accumulation of books as being at variance with the poverty his friars professed, and he resisted the eager desire for mere book-learning, so prevalent in his time, in so far as it struck at the roots of that simplicity which entered so largely into the essence of his life and ideal and threatened to stifle the spirit of prayer, which he accounted preferable to all the rest.

In 1221, so some writers tell us, Francis drew up a new rule for the Friars Minor. Others regard this so-called Rule of 1221 not as a new rule, but as the first one which Innocent had orally approved; not, indeed, its original form, which we do not possess, but with such additions and modifications as it has suffered during the course of twelve years. However this may be, the composition called by some the Rule of 1221 is very unlike any conventional rule ever made. It was too lengthy and unprecise to become a formal rule, and two years later Francis retired to Fonte Colombo, a hermitage near Rieti, and rewrote the rule in more compendious form. This revised draft he entrusted to Brother Elias, who not long after declared he had lost it through negligence. Francis thereupon returned to the solitude of Fonte Colombo, and recast the rule on the same lines as before, its twenty-three chapters being reduced to twelve and some of its precepts being modified in certain details at the instance of Cardinal Ugolino. In this form the rule was solemnly approved by Honorius III, 29 November, 1223 (Litt. "Solet

annuere"). This Second Rule, as it is usually called or *Regula Bullata* of the Friars Minor, is the one ever since professed throughout the First Order of St. Francis (see RULE OF SAINT FRANCIS). It is based on the three vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, special stress however being laid on poverty, which Francis sought to make the special characteristic of his order, and which became the sign to be contradicted. This vow of absolute poverty in the first and second orders and the reconciliation of the religious with the secular state in the Third Order of Penance are the chief novelties introduced by Francis in monastic regulation.

It was during Christmastide of this year (1223) that the saint conceived the idea of celebrating the Nativity "in a new manner", by reproducing in a church at Greccio the *praesepe* of Bethlehem, and he has thus come to be regarded as having inaugurated the popular devotion of the Crib. Christmas appears indeed to have been the favourite feast of Francis, and he wished to persuade the emperor to make a special law that men should then provide well for the birds and the beasts, as well as for the poor, so that all might have occasion to rejoice in the Lord.

Early in August, 1224, Francis retired with three companions to "that rugged rock 'twixt Tiber and Arno", as Dante called La Verna, there to keep a forty days fast in preparation for Michaelmas. During this retreat the sufferings of Christ became more than ever the burden of his meditations; into few souls, perhaps, had the full meaning of the Passion so deeply entered. It was on or about the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (14 September) while praying on the mountainside, that he beheld the marvellous vision of the seraph, as a sequel of which there appeared on his body the visible marks of the five wounds of the Crucified which, says an early writer, had long since been impressed upon his heart. Brother Leo, who was with St. Francis when he received the stigmata, has left us in his note to the saint's autograph blessing, preserved at Assisi, a clear and simple account of the miracle, which for the rest is better attested than many another historical fact. The saint's right side is described as bearing an open wound which looked as if made by a lance, while through his hands and feet were black nails of flesh, the points of which were bent backward. After the reception of the stigmata, Francis suffered increasing pains throughout his frail body, already broken by continual mortification. For, condescending as the saint always was to the weaknesses of others, he was ever so unsparing towards himself that at the last he felt constrained to ask pardon of "Brother Ass", as he called his body, for having treated it so harshly. Worn out, moreover, as Francis now was by eighteen years of unrelenting toil, his strength gave way completely, and at times his eyesight so far failed him that he was almost wholly blind. During an access of anguish, Francis paid a last visit to St. Clare at St. Damian's, and it was in a little hut of reeds, made for him in the garden there, that the saint composed that "Cantic of the Sun", in which his poetic genius expands itself so gloriously. This was in September, 1225. Not long afterwards Francis, at the urgent instance of Brother Elias, underwent an unsuccessful operation for the eyes, at Rieti. He seems to

have passed the winter 1225-26 at Siena, whither he had been taken for further medical treatment. In April, 1226, during an interval of improvement, Francis was moved to Cortona, and it is believed to have been while resting at the hermitage of the Celle there, that the saint dictated his testament, which he describes as a "reminder, a warning, and an exhortation". In this touching document Francis, writing from the fullness of his heart, urges anew with the simple eloquence, the few, but clearly defined, principles that were to guide his followers, implicit obedience to superiors as holding the place of God, literal observance of the rule "without gloss", especially as regards poverty, and the duty of manual labor, being solemnly enjoined on all the friars. Meanwhile alarming dropsical symptoms had developed, and it was in a dying condition that Francis set out for Assisi. A roundabout route was taken by the little caravan that escorted him, for it was feared to follow the direct road lest the saucy Perugians should attempt to carry Francis off by force so that he might die in their city, which would thus enter into possession of his coveted relics. It was therefore under a strong guard that Francis, in July, 1226, was finally borne in safety to the bishop's palace in his native city amid the enthusiastic rejoicings of the entire populace. In the early autumn Francis, feeling the hand of death upon him, was carried to his beloved Porziuncola, that he might breathe his last sigh where his vocation had been revealed to him and whence his order had struggled into sight. On the way thither he asked to be set down, and with painful effort he invoked a beautiful blessing on Assisi, which, however, his eyes could no longer discern. The saint's last days were passed at the Porziuncola in a tiny hut, near the chapel, that served as an infirmary. The arrival there about this time of the Lady Jacoba of Settesoli, who had come with her two sons and a great retinue to bid Francis farewell, caused some consternation, since women were forbidden to enter the friary. But Francis in his tender gratitude to this Roman noblewoman, made an exception in her favour, and "Brother Jacoba", as Francis had named her on account of her fortitude, remained to the last. On the eve of his death, the saint, in imitation of his Divine Master, had bread brought to him and broken. This he distributed among those present, blessing Bernard of Quintaville, his first companion, Elias, his vicar, and all the others in order. "I have done my part," he said next, "may Christ teach you to do yours." Then wishing to give a last token of detachment and to show he no longer had anything in common with the world, Francis removed his poor habit and lay down on the bare ground, covered with a borrowed cloth, rejoicing that he was able to keep faith with his Lady Poverty to the end. After a while he asked to have read to him the Passion according to St. John, and then in faltering tones he himself intoned Psalm cxli. At the concluding verse, "Bring my soul out of prison", Francis was led away from earth by "Sister Death", in whose praise he had shortly before added a new strophe to his "Cantic of the Sun". It was Saturday evening, 3 October, 1226, Francis being then in the forty-fifth year of his age, and the twentieth from his perfect conversion to Christ.

The saint had, in his humility, it is said, expressed a wish to be buried on the Colle d'Inferno, a despised hill without Assisi, where criminals were executed.

However this may be, his body was, on 4 October, borne in triumphant procession to the city, a halt being made at St. Damian's, that St. Clare and her companions might venerate the sacred stigmata now visible to all, and it was placed provisionally in the church of St. George (now within the enclosure of the monastery of St. Clare), where the saint had learned to read and had first preached. Many miracles are recorded to have taken place at his tomb. Francis was canonized at St. George's by Gregory IX, 16 July, 1228. On that day following the pope laid the first stone of the great double church of St. Francis, erected in honour of the new saint, and thither on 25 May, 1230, Francis's remains were secretly transferred by Brother Elias and buried far down under the high altar in the lower church. Here, after lying hidden for six centuries, like that of St. Clare's, Francis's coffin was found, 12 December, 1818, as a result of a toilsome search lasting fifty-two nights. This discovery of the saint's body is commemorated in the order by a special office on 12 December, and that of his translation by another on 25 May. His feast is kept throughout the Church on 4 October, and the impression of the stigmata on his body is celebrated on 17 September.

It has been said with pardonable warmth that Francis entered into glory in his lifetime, and that he is the one saint whom all succeeding generations have agreed in canonizing. Certain it is that those also who care little about the order he founded, and who have but scant sympathy with the Church to which he ever gave his devout allegiance, even those who know that Christianity to be Divine, find themselves, instinctively as it were, looking across the ages for guidance to the wonderful Umbrian Poverello, and invoking his name in grateful remembrance. This unique position Francis doubtless owes in no small measure to his singularly lovable and winsome personality. Few saints ever exhaled "the good odour of Christ" to such a degree as he. There was about Francis, moreover, a chivalry and a poetry which gave to his other-worldliness a quite romantic charm and beauty. Other saints have seemed entirely dead to the world around them, but Francis was ever thoroughly in touch with the spirit of the age. He delighted in the songs of Provence, rejoiced in the new-born freedom of his native city, and cherished what Dante calls the pleasant sound of his dear land. And this exquisite human element in Francis's character was the key to that far-reaching, all-embracing sympathy, which may be almost called his characteristic gift. In his heart, as an old chronicler puts it, the whole world found refuge, the poor, the sick and the fallen being the objects of his solicitude in a more special manner. Heedless as Francis ever was of the world's judgments in his own regard, it was always his constant care to respect the opinions of all and to wound the feelings of none. Wherefore he admonishes the friars to use only low and mean tables, so that "if a beggar were to come to sit down near them he might believe that he was but with his equals and need not blush on account of his poverty." One night, we are told, the friary was aroused by the cry "I am dying." "Who are you", exclaimed Francis arising, "and why are dying?" "I am dying of hunger", answered the voice of one who had been too prone to fasting. Whereupon Francis had a table laid out and sat down beside the famished friar,

and lest the latter might be ashamed to eat alone, ordered all the other brethren to join in the repast. Francis's devotedness in consoling the afflicted made him so condescending that he shrank not from abiding with the lepers in their loathly lazar-houses and from eating with them out of the same platter. But above all it is his dealings with the erring that reveal the truly Christian spirit of his charity. "Saintlier than any of the saint", writes Celano, "among sinners he was as one of themselves". Writing to a certain minister in the order, Francis says: "Should there be a brother anywhere in the world who has sinned, no matter how great soever his fault may be, let him not go away after he has once seen thy face without showing pity towards him; and if he seek not mercy, ask him if he does not desire it. And by this I will know if you love God and me." Again, to medieval notions of justice the evil-doer was beyond the law and there was no need to keep faith with him. But according to Francis, not only was justice due even to evil-doers, but justice must be preceded by courtesy as by a herald. Courtesy, indeed, in the saint's quaint concept, was the younger sister of charity and one of the qualities of God Himself, Who "of His courtesy", he declares, "gives His sun and His rain to the just and the unjust". This habit of courtesy Francis ever sought to enjoin on his disciples. "Whoever may come to us", he writes, "whether a friend or a foe, a thief or a robber, let him be kindly received", and the feast which he spread for the starving brigands in the forest at Monte Casale sufficed to show that "as he taught so he wrought". The very animals found in Francis a tender friend and protector; thus we find him pleading with the people of Gubbio to feed the fierce wolf that had ravished their flocks, because through hunger "Brother Wolf" had done this wrong. And the early legends have left us many an idyllic picture of how beasts and birds alike susceptible to the charm of Francis's gentle ways, entered into loving companionship with him; how the hunted leveret sought to attract his notice; how the half-frozen bees crawled towards him in the winter to be fed; how the wild falcon fluttered around him; how the nightingale sang with him in sweetest content in the ilex grove at the Carceri, and how his "little brethren the birds" listened so devoutly to his sermon by the roadside near Bevagna that Francis chided himself for not having thought of preaching to them before. Francis's love of nature also stands out in bold relief in the world he moved in. He delighted to commune with the wild flowers, the crystal spring, and the friendly fire, and to greet the sun as it rose upon the fair Umbrian vale. In this respect, indeed, St. Francis's "gift of sympathy" seems to have been wider even than St. Paul's, for we find no evidence in the great Apostle of a love for nature or for animals.

Hardly less engaging than his boundless sense of fellow-feeling was Francis's downright sincerity and artless simplicity. "Dearly beloved," he once began a sermon following upon a severe illness, "I have to confess to God and you that during this Lent I have eaten cakes made with lard." And when the guardian insisted for the sake of warmth upon Francis having a fox skin sewn under his worn-out tunic, the saint consented only upon condition that another skin of the same size be sewn outside. For it was his singular study never to hide from men that which known to God. "What a man is in the sight of God," he was wont to

repeat, "so much he is and no more" -- a saying which passed into the "Imitation", and has been often quoted. Another winning trait of Francis which inspires the deepest affection was his unswerving directness of purpose and unfaltering following after an ideal. "His dearest desire so long as he lived", Celano tells us, "was ever to seek among wise and simple, perfect and imperfect, the means to walk in the way of truth." To Francis love was the truest of all truths; hence his deep sense of personal responsibility towards his fellows. The love of Christ and Him Crucified permeated the whole life and character of Francis, and he placed the chief hope of redemption and redress for a suffering humanity in the literal imitation of his Divine Master. The saint imitated the example of Christ as literally as it was in him to do so; barefoot, and in absolute poverty, he proclaimed the reign of love. This heroic imitation of Christ's poverty was perhaps the distinctive mark of Francis's vocation, and he was undoubtedly, as Bossuet expresses it, the most ardent, enthusiastic, and desperate lover of poverty the world has yet seen. After money Francis most detested discord and divisions. Peace, therefore, became his watchword, and the pathetic reconciliation he effected in his last days between the Bishop and Potesta of Assisi is but one instance out of many of his power to quell the storms of passion and restore tranquility to hearts torn asunder by civil strife. The duty of a servant of God, Francis declared, was to lift up the hearts of men and move them to spiritual gladness. Hence it was not "from monastic stalls or with the careful irresponsibility of the enclosed student" that the saint and his followers addressed the people; "they dwelt among them and grappled with the evils of the system under which the people groaned". They worked in return for their fare, doing for the lowest the most menial labour, and speaking to the poorest words of hope such as the world had not heard for many a day. In this wise Francis bridged the chasm between an aristocratic clergy and the common people, and though he taught no new doctrine, he so far repopularized the old one given on the Mount that the Gospel took on a new life and called forth a new love.

Such in briefest outline are some of the salient features which render the figure of Francis one of such supreme attraction that all manner of men feel themselves drawn towards him, with a sense of personal attachment. Few, however, of those who feel the charm of Francis's personality may follow the saint to his lonely height of rapt communion with God. For, however engaging a "minstrel of the Lord", Francis was none the less a profound mystic in the truest sense of the word. The whole world was to him one luminous ladder, mounting upon the rungs of which he approached and beheld God. It is very misleading, however, to portray Francis as living "at a height where dogma ceases to exist", and still further from the truth to represent the trend of his teaching as one in which orthodoxy is made subservient to "humanitarianism". A very cursory inquiry into Francis's religious belief suffices to show that it embraced the entire Catholic dogma, nothing more or less. If then the saint's sermons were on the whole moral rather than doctrinal, it was less because he preached to meet the wants of his day, and those whom he addressed had not strayed from dogmatic truth;

they were still "hearers", if not "doers", of the Word. For this reason Francis set aside all questions more theoretical than practical, and returned to the Gospel.

Again, to see in Francis only the loving friend of all God's creatures, the joyous singer of nature, is to overlook altogether that aspect of his work which is the explanation of all the rest -- its supernatural side. Few lives have been more wholly imbued with the supernatural, as even Renan admits. Nowhere, perhaps, can there be found a keener insight into the innermost world of spirit, yet so closely were the supernatural and the natural blended in Francis, that his very asceticism was often clothed in the guise of romance, as witness his wooing the Lady Poverty, in a sense that almost ceased to be figurative. For Francis's singularly vivid imagination was impregnate with the imagery of the *chanson de geste*, and owing to his markedly dramatic tendency, he delighted in suiting his action to his thought. So, too, the saint's native turn for the picturesque led him to unite religion and nature. He found in all created things, however trivial, some reflection of the Divine perfection, and he loved to admire in them the beauty, power, wisdom, and goodness of their Creator. And so it came to pass that he saw sermons even in stones, and good in everything. Moreover, Francis's simple, childlike nature fastened on the thought, that if all are from one Father then all are real kin. Hence his custom of claiming brotherhood with all manner of animate and inanimate objects. The personification, therefore, of the elements in the "Canticle of the Sun" is something more than a mere literary figure. Francis's love of creatures was not simply the offspring of a soft or sentimental disposition; it arose rather from that deep and abiding sense of the presence of God, which underlay all he said and did. Even so, Francis's habitual cheerfulness was not that of a careless nature, or of one untouched by sorrow. None witnessed Francis's hidden struggles, his long agonies of tears, or his secret wrestlings in prayer. And if we meet him making dumb-show of music, by playing a couple of sticks like a violin to give vent to his glee, we also find him heart-sore with foreboding at the dire dissensions in the order which threatened to make shipwreck of his ideal. Nor were temptations or other weakening maladies of the soul wanting to the saint at any time. Francis's lightness had its source in that entire surrender of everything present and passing, in which he had found the interior liberty of the children of God; it drew its strength from his intimate union with Jesus in the Holy Communion. The mystery of the Holy Eucharist, being an extension of the Passion, held a preponderant place in the life of Francis, and he had nothing more at heart than all that concerned the cultus of the Blessed Sacrament. Hence we not only hear of Francis conjuring the clergy to show befitting respect for everything connected with the Sacrifice of the Mass, but we also see him sweeping out poor churches, questing sacred vessels for them, and providing them with altar-breads made by himself. So great, indeed, was Francis's reverence for the priesthood, because of its relation to the Adorable Sacrament, that in his humility he never dared to aspire to that dignity. Humility was, no doubt, the saint's ruling virtue. The idol of an enthusiastic popular devotion, he ever truly believed himself less than the least. Equally admirable was Francis's prompt and docile obedience to the voice of grace within

him, even in the early days of his ill-defined ambition, when the spirit of interpretation failed him. Later on, the saint, with as clear as a sense of his message as any prophet ever had, yielded ungrudging submission to what constituted ecclesiastical authority. No reformer, moreover, was ever, less aggressive than Francis. His apostolate embodied the very noblest spirit of reform; he strove to correct abuses by holding up an ideal. He stretched out his arms in yearning towards those who longed for the "better gifts". The others he left alone.

And thus, without strife or schism, God's Poor Little Man of Assisi became the means of renewing the youth of the Church and of imitating the most potent and popular religious movement since the beginnings of Christianity. No doubt this movement had its social as well as its religious side. That the Third Order of St. Francis went far towards re-Christianizing medieval society is a matter of history. However, Francis's foremost aim was a religious one. To rekindle the love of God in the world and reanimate the life of the spirit in the hearts of men -- such was his mission. But because St. Francis sought first the Kingdom of God and His justice, many other things were added unto him. And his own exquisite Franciscan spirit, as it is called, passing out into the wide world, became an abiding source of inspiration. Perhaps it savours of exaggeration to say, as has been said, that "all the threads of civilization in the subsequent centuries seem to hark back to Francis", and that since his day "the character of the whole Roman Catholic Church is visibly Umbrian". It would be difficult, none the less, to overestimate the effect produced by Francis upon the mind of his time, or the quickening power he wielded on the generations which have succeeded him. To mention two aspects only of his all-pervading influence, Francis must surely be reckoned among those to whom the world of art and letters is deeply indebted. Prose, as Arnold observes, could not satisfy the saint's ardent soul, so he made poetry. He was, indeed, too little versed in the laws of composition to advance far in that direction. But his was the first cry of a nascent poetry which found its highest expression in the "Divine Comedy"; wherefore Francis has been styled the precursor of Dante. What the saint did was to teach a people "accustomed to the artificial versification of courtly Latin and Provencal poets, the use of their native tongue in simple spontaneous hymns, which became even more popular with the *Laudi* and *Cantici* of his poet-follower Jacopone of Todi". In so far, moreover, as Francis's *repraesentatio*, as Salimbene calls it, of the stable at Bethlehem is the first mystery-play we hear of in Italy, he is said to have borne a part in the revival of the drama. However this may be, if Francis's love of song called forth the beginnings of Italian verse, his life no less brought about the birth of Italian art. His story, says Ruskin, became a passionate tradition painted everywhere with delight. Full of colour, dramatic possibilities, and human interest, the early Franciscan legend afforded the most popular material for painters since the life of Christ. No sooner, indeed did Francis's figure make an appearance in art than it became at once a favourite subject, especially with the mystical Umbrian School. So true is this that it has been said we might by following his

familiar figure "construct a history of Christian art, from the predecessors of Cimabue down to Guido Reni, Rubens, and Van Dyck".

Probably the oldest likeness of Francis that has come down to us is that preserved in the *Sacro Speco* at Subiaco. It is said that it was painted by a Benedictine monk during the saint's visit there, which may have been in 1218. The absence of the stigmata, halo, and title of saint in this fresco form its chief claim to be considered a contemporary picture; it is not, however, a real portrait in the modern sense of the word, and we are dependent for the traditional presentment of Francis rather on artists' ideals, like the Della Robbia statue at the Porziuncola, which is surely the saint's *vera effigies*, as no Byzantine so-called portrait can ever be, and the graphic description of Francis given by Celano (*Vita Prima*, c.lxxxiii). Of less than middle height, we are told, and frail in form, Francis had a long yet cheerful face and soft but strong voice, small brilliant black eyes, dark brown hair, and a sparse beard. His person was in no way imposing, yet there was about the saint a delicacy, grace, and distinction which made him most attractive.

The literary materials for the history of St. Francis are more than usually copious and authentic. There are indeed few if any medieval lives more thoroughly documented. We have in the first place the saint's own writings. These are not voluminous and were never written with a view to setting forth his ideas systematically, yet they bear the stamp of his personality and are marked by the same unvarying features of his preaching. A few leading thoughts taken "from the words of the Lord" seemed to him all sufficing, and these he repeats again and again, adapting them to the needs of the different persons whom he addresses. Short, simple, and informal, Francis's writings breathe the unstudied love of the Gospel and enforce the same practical morality, while they abound in allegories and personification and reveal an intimate interweaving of Biblical phraseology. Not all the saint's writings have come down to us, and not a few of these formerly attributed to him are now with greater likelihood ascribed to others. The extant and authentic *opuscula* of Francis comprise, besides the rule of the Friars Minor and some fragments of the other Seraphic legislation, several letters, including one addressed "to all the Christians who dwell in the whole world," a series of spiritual counsels addressed to his disciples, the "Laudes Creaturarum" or "Canticle of the Sun", and some lesser praises, an Office of the Passion compiled for his own use, and few other orisons which show us Francis even as Celano saw him, "not so much a man's praying as prayer itself". In addition to the saint's writings the sources of the history of Francis include a number of early papal bulls and some other diplomatic documents, as they are called, bearing upon his life and work. Then come the biographies properly so called. These include the lives written 1229-1247 by Thomas of Celano, one of Francis's followers; a joint narrative of his life compiled by Leo, Rufinus, and Angelus, intimate companions of the saint, in 1246; and the celebrated legend of St. Bonaventure, which appeared about 1263; besides a somewhat more polemic legend called the "Speculum Perfectionis", attributed to Brother Leo, the state of

which is a matter of controversy. There are also several important thirteenth-century chronicles of the order, like those of Jordan, Eccleston, and Bernard of Besse, and not a few later works, such as the "Chronica XXIV. Generalium" and the "Liber de Conformitate", which are in some sort a continuation of them. It is upon these works that all the later biographies of Francis's life are based.

Recent years have witnessed a truly remarkable upgrowth of interest in the life and work of St. Francis, more especially among non-Catholics, and Assisi has become in consequence the goal of a new race of pilgrims. This interest, for the most part literary and academic, is centered mainly in the study of the primitive documents relating to the saint's history and the beginnings of the Franciscan Order. Although inaugurated some years earlier, this movement received its greatest impulse from the publication in 1894 of Paul Sabatier's "Vie de S. François", a work which was almost simultaneously crowned by the French Academy and place upon the Index. In spite of the author's entire lack of sympathy with the saint's religious standpoint, his biography of Francis bespeaks vast erudition, deep research, and rare critical insight, and it has opened up a new era in the study of Franciscan resources. To further this study an International Society of Franciscan Studies was founded at Assisi in 1902, the aim of which is to collect a complete library of works on Franciscan history and to compile a catalogue of scattered Franciscan manuscripts; several periodicals, devoted to Franciscan documents and discussions exclusively, have moreover been established in different countries. Although a large literature has grown up around the figure of the *Poverello* within a short time, nothing new of essential value has been added to what was already known of the saint. The energetic research work of recent years has resulted in the recovery of several important early texts, and has called forth many really fine critical studies dealing with the sources, but the most welcome feature of the modern interest in Franciscan origins has been the careful re-editing and translating of Francis's own writings and of nearly all the contemporary manuscript authorities bearing on his life. Not a few of the controverted questions connected therewith are of considerable import, even to those not especially students of the Franciscan legend, but they could not be made intelligible within the limits of the present article. It must suffice, moreover, to indicate only some of the chief works on the life of St. Francis.

Prayers of Saint Francis of Assisi:

Canticle of Brother Sun

*Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord,
All praise is Yours, all glory, all honour and all blessings.
To you alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.*

*Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour,
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
In the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,
And fair and stormy, all weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.*

*Praised be You my Lord through Sister Water,
So useful, humble, precious and pure.*

*Praised be You my Lord through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.*

*Praised be You my Lord through our Sister,
Mother Earth
who sustains and governs us,
producing varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.*

*Praise be You my Lord through those who grant pardon
for love of You and bear sickness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
By You Most High, they will be crowned.*

*Praised be You, my Lord through Sister Death,
from whom no-one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will.
No second death can do them harm.*

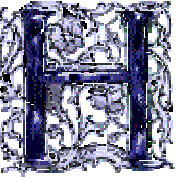
*Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks,
And serve Him with great humility.*



Prayer in Praise of God

*You are holy, Lord, the only God,
and Your deeds are wonderful.
You are strong.*

*You are great.
You are the Most High.
You are Almighty.
You, Holy Father are King of heaven and earth.
You are Three and One, Lord God, all Good.
You are Good, all Good, supreme Good,
Lord God, living and true.
You are love. You are wisdom.
You are humility. You are endurance.
You are rest. You are peace.
You are joy and gladness.
You are justice and moderation.
You are all our riches, and You suffice for us.
You are beauty.
You are gentleness.
You are our protector.
You are our guardian and defender.
You are our courage.
You are our haven and our hope.
You are our faith, our great consolation.
You are our eternal life,
Great and Wonderful Lord,
God Almighty, Merciful Saviour.*



A Salutation to the Virtues

*Hail Queen Wisdom,
the Lord salute thee with thy sister
Holy-Pure Simplicity.*

*Lady Holy Poverty,
the Lord salute thee with thy sister Holy Humility.
Lady Holy Charity,
the Lord salute thee with thy sister Holy Obedience.
Most holy virtues,
the Lord salute all of you,
He from whom you come and proceed.
There is scarcely a man in all the world,
who can have one of you, before he dies.
He who has one and offends not the others, has all.
And he who offends one, has none and offends all.
And any whatsoever confounds vices and sins.
Holy Wisdom confounds satan and all his wickednesses.
Pure Holy Simplicity confounds all the wisdom
of this world and the wisdom of the body.
Holy Poverty confounds cupidity and avarice
and the cares of this world.
Holy Humility confounds pride and all the men,
who are in the world,
and likewise all the things, which are in the world.
Holy Charity confounds all the diabolic
and carnal temptations and all carnal fears.
Holy Obedience confounds all things corporal
both carnal and one's own willings
and holds the body mortified in obedience to the spirit
and in obedience to one's brother
and is subject and submissive to all the men,
who are in the world and not only to men,
but even to all the beasts and wildlife,
so that they might do with him, whatever they will,*

*as much as it will have been given them
from above by the Lord.*

A Prayer before a Crucifix

*Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the shadows of my heart,
and grant unto me a right faith,
a certain hope and perfect charity,
sense and understanding,
Lord, so that I may accomplish
Thy holy and true command*

A Salute to the Blessed Virgin Mary

*Hail, holy Lady, most holy Queen,
Mary, Mother of God, ever Virgin.*

*You were chosen by the Most High Father in heaven,
consecrated by Him, with His most Holy Beloved Son
and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.
On you descended and still remains
all the fullness of grace and every good.*

*Hail, His Palace.
Hail His Tabernacle.
Hail His Robe.
Hail His Handmaid.
Hail, His Mother.*

*And Hail, all holy Virtues, who, by grace
and inspiration of the Holy Spirit,
are poured into the hearts of the faithful
so that from their faithless state,*

*they may be made
faithful servants of God through you.*

A prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving

*Almighty, Most Holy, Most High and Highest God,
Holy Father and Just One,
Lord King of Heaven and Earth,
on account of Thee Thyself we give Thee thanks,
because through Thy holy will
and through Thy only Son with the Holy Spirit
Thou has created all spiritual and corporal things
and Thou has placed us,
made according to Thy image and likeness,
in paradise.
And we fell through our own fault.*

*And we give Thee thanks, because
just as Thou has created us through Thy Son,
so through Thy sacred love,
with which Thou has loved us,
Thou had Him born true God and true Man
from the glorious and ever-Virgin Holy Mary
and Thou willed that we captives be redeemed
through His Cross and Blood and Death.*

*And we give Thee thanks,
because Thy Son Himself is to come
in the glory of His Majesty to send the accursed,
who do not do penance
and who do not know Thee,
into eternal fire, and to say to all,
who know Thee and adore and serve Thee in penance:
Come, you blessed of My Father,
lay hold of the kingdom,*

*which has been prepared for you
from the origin of the world.*

*And because all of us wretches and sinners
are not worthy to mention Thee,
we entreat Thee suppliantly,
so that Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Beloved Son,
in whom Thou art well pleased,
together with the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete,
may give Thee thanks,
as it may please Thee and Him, for all things,
He who for Thee is always sufficient for all things,
through whom Thou has made so many things for us.
Alleluia.*

*And we humbly entreat the glorious Mother,
the most blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
blessed Michael, Gabriel and Raphael
and all the choirs of the blessed Seraphim, Cherubim,
Thrones, Dominations, Principalities, Powers,
Virtues, Angels, Archangels,
blessed John the Baptist, John the Evangelist,
Peter, Paul and the blessed Patriarchs,
Prophets, the Holy Innocents, Apostles, Evangelists,
Disciples, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins,
blessed Elijah and Enoch, and all the Saints,
who were and will be and are,
for the sake of Thy love, so that,
as it may please Thee,
to render thanks for these things to Thee
the true God, eternal and living,
with Thy most dear Son,
Our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the Holy Spirit unto the ages of ages.
Amen Alleluia*

*And all of us friar minors, useless servants,
humbly beg and beseech all within in Holy Catholic
and Apostolic Church willing to serve the Lord God
and all those following orders,
priests, deacons, subdeacons,
acolytes, exorcists, lectors, ushers and all the clergy,
all the religious men and women,
all the converts and children, poor and needed,
kings and princes, labourers and farmers,
servants and lords, all virgins and the continent
and the married, lay, men and women,
all the infants, adolescents, youth and elderly and infirm,
all the small and great, and
all peoples, clans, tribes and tongues,
all nations and all men of whatever lands,
who are and who will be,
that we may persevere in the True Faith
and in penance, because no one can be saved otherwise*

*Let us all love with all our heart,
with all our soul, with all our mind,
with all our virtue and strength, with all our intellect,
and with all our powers of soul and body,
with all our effort, with all our affection,
with all our guts, with all our desires and willings
the Lord God, who gave and gives all of us
our entire body, our entire soul and our entire life,
He who created, redeemed,
and by His mercy alone will save us,
He who had worked and works all good for us
who are miserable and wretched,
putrid and stinking, ungrateful and wicked.
Therefore let us desire nothing other,
let us want nothing other,
may nothing other please and delight us
except the Our Creator and Redeemer and Saviour,*

*the only true God,
who is the Full Good, All Good, entirely Good,
the True and Highest Good,
who alone is good, faithful, meek, gentle and sweet,
who alone is holy, just, true, holy and right,
who alone is kind, innocent, clean,
from whom and through whom
and in whom is all pardon, all grace,
all the glory of all the penitents and the just,
of all the blessed rejoicing together in Heaven.
Therefore let nothing impede, nothing separate,
nothing come between us and Him;
wherever all of us are in every place,
at every hour and in every season, daily and continually,
let us believe truly and humbly and hold in our hearts
and love, honour, adore, serve, praise
and bless, glorify and exalt above all,
magnify and give thanks to
the Most High and Highest Eternal God,
in Trinity and Unity,
the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
the Creator of all and the Saviour of all who believe
and hope in and love Him,
who is without beginning and without end,
immutable, invisible, inexplicable, ineffable,
incomprehensible, unsearchable, blessed,
praiseworthy, glorious, exalted above all,
sublime, exceeding, gentle, lovable,
delightful and desirable above all things
throughout the ages.*

Amen.

An Exhortation to praise God

*Fear the Lord and give Him honor.
Worthy is the Lord to receive praise and honor
All who fear the Lord, praise Him
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee.
Praise Him Heaven and earth.
Praise the Lord all you rivers.
Bless the Lord you sons of God.*

*This is the day which the Lord has made,
let us exult and rejoice in it.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! King of Israel!
Every spirit praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord, since He is Good.
All you who read this, bless the Lord.
All you creatures bless the Lord.
All you birds of heaven praise the Lord.
All you children praise the Lord.
You youths and virgins praise God
Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive praise, glory and honour.
Blessed be the Holy Trinity and undivided Unity.
St. Michael the Archangel defend us in battle.*

Peace Prayer

This prayer, although often attributed to Saint Francis , was almost certainly not written by him. It apparently dates from the early part of last century, and its author is unknown. It was found in Normandy in 1915, written on the back of a holy card of St. Francis.

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace.

*Where there is hatred, let me bring love.
Where there is injury, let me bring pardon.
Where there is discord, let me bring union.
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.*

*Where there is error, let me bring truth.
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.
Where there is darkness, let me bring light.*

*O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.
It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

Paraphrase of "Our Father"

*O Most Holy Our Father: Creator,
Redeemer, Consoler and Our Saviour.
Who art in Heaven: in the Angels and in the Saints;
enlightening them unto knowledge, since Thou, Lord, art Light;
inflaming them unto love, since Thou, Lord, art Love;
indwelling and filling them unto blessedness,
since Thou, Lord, art the Highest, the Eternal Good,
from whom is all good, without whom nothing is good.*

*Hallowed be Thy Name:
may the knowledge of Thee in us be made bright,
so that we may know, what is the breadth of Thy kindnesses,
the length of Thy promises,
the sublimity of Thy Majesty
and the depth of Thy judgements.*

*Thy Kingdom come:
so that Thou may reignest in us by grace*

*and makes us come unto Thy Kingdom,
where vision of Thee is made manifest,
love of Thee made perfect,
company with Thee blessed,
enjoyment of Thee everlasting.*

*Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven:
so that we may love Thee with our whole heart
thinking of Thee always,
with our whole soul desiring Thee always,
with our whole mind directing unto Thee all our intentions,
seeking Thy honour in all things
and with all our strength expending our every strength
and sense of soul and body in submission
to Thy love and nothing else;
and may we love our neighbours as ourselves
drawing all to Thy love to the extent of our abilities,
rejoicing over the good things of others just as over our own
and compassionating them in evils
and giving offence to no one.*

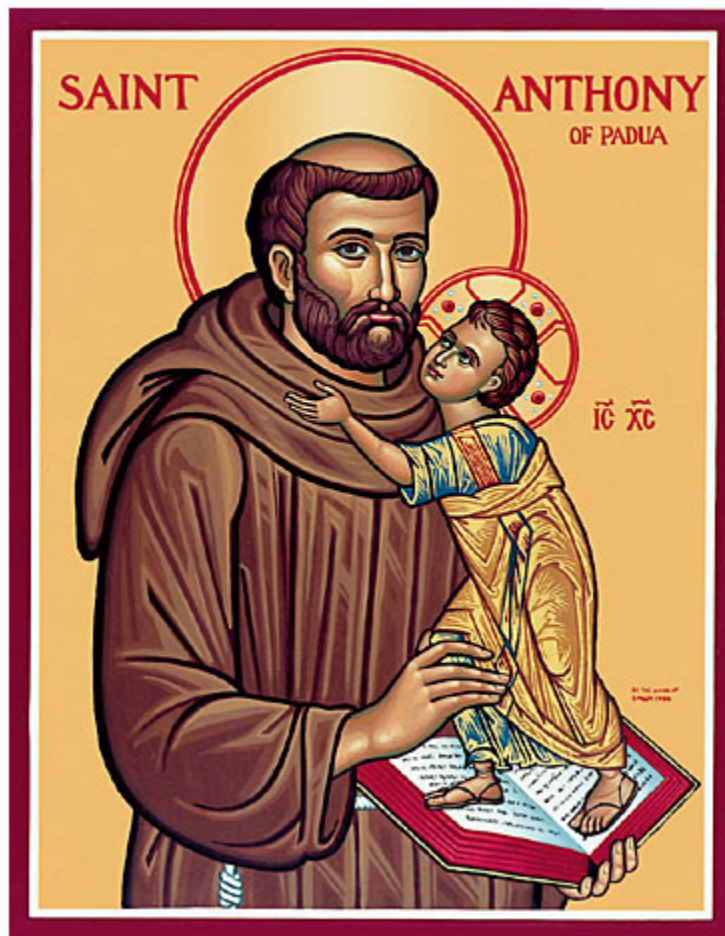
*Give us this day, Thy beloved Son,
Our Lord Jesus Christ, our daily bread:
to remember and understand and reverence the love
-which He had for us-
and those things, which He did, said or endured for us.
And forgive us our debts:
by Thy ineffable mercy,
through the virtue of the Passion of Thy beloved Son
and by the merits and intercession of the Blessed Virgin
and all Thy elect.*

*As we forgive our debtors:
and what we do not fully forgive,
may Thou, Lord, make us, fully forgive,
so that we may truly love our enemies for the sake of Thee*

*and intercede devoutly for them with Thee,
returning to none evil for evil
and striving to advance all unto Thee.
And lead us not into temptation:
hidden or manifest, sudden or importune.
But deliver us from evil:
past, present, and future.
Glory to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.*

Saint of: dying alone, fire, merchants, Italy.

Icon of Saint Anthony of Padua



Franciscan Tl ally Arcella
 --Ed.], 13 June, 1231. He received in baptism the name of Ferdinand.

Later writers of the fifteenth century asserted that his father was Martin Bouillon, descendant of the renowned Godfrey de Bouillon, commander of the First Crusade, and his mother, Theresa Tavejra, descendant of Froila I, fourth king of Asturia. Unfortunately, however, his genealogy is uncertain; all that we know of his parents is that they were noble, powerful, and God-fearing people, and at the time of Ferdinand's birth were both still young, and living near the Cathedral of Lisbon.

Having been educated in the Cathedral school, Ferdinand, at the age of fifteen, joined the Canons Regular of St. Augustine, in the convent of St. Vincent, just outside the city walls (1210). Two years later to avoid being distracted by relatives and friends, who frequently came to visit him, he betook himself with permission of his superior to the Convent of Santa Croce in C3imbra (1212), where he remained for eight years, occupying his time mainly with study and prayer. Gifted with an excellent understanding and a prodigious memory, he soon gathered from the Sacred Scriptures and the writings of the Holy Fathers a treasure of theological knowledge.

In the year 1220, having seen conveyed into the Church of Santa Croce the bodies of the first Franciscan martyrs, who had suffered death at Morocco, 16 January of the same year, he too was inflamed with the desire of martyrdom, and resolved to become a Friar Minor, that he might preach the Faith to the Saracens and suffer for Christ's sake. Having confided his intention to some of the brethren of the convent of Olivares (near C  imbra), who came to beg alms at the Abbey of the Canons Regular, he received from their hands the Franciscan habit in the same Convent of Santa Croce. Thus Ferdinand left the Canons Regular of St. Augustine to join the Order of Friars Minor, taking at the same time the new name of Anthony, a name which later on the Convent of Olivares also adopted.

A short time after his entry into the order, Anthony started for Morocco, but, stricken down by a severe illness, which affected him the entire winter, he was compelled to sail for Portugal the following spring, 1221. His ship, however, was overtaken by a violent storm and driven upon the coast of Sicily, where Anthony then remained for some time, till he had regained his health. Having heard meanwhile from the brethren of Messina that a general chapter was to be held at Assisi, 30 May, he journeyed thither, arriving in time to take part in it. The chapter over, Anthony remained entirely unnoticed.

"He said not a word of his studies", writes his earliest biographer, "nor of the services he had performed; his only desire was to follow Jesus Christ and Him crucified". Accordingly, he applied to Father Graziano, Provincial of C  imbra, for a place where he could live in solitude and penance, and enter more fully into the spirit and discipline of Franciscan life. Father Graziano, being just at that time in need of a priest for the hermitage of Montepaolo (near Forli), sent him thither, that he might celebrate Mass for the lay-brethren.

While Anthony lived retired at Montepaolo it happened, one day, that a number of Franciscan and Dominican friars were sent together to Forli for ordination. Anthony was also present, but simply as companion of the Provincial. When the time for ordination had arrived, it was found that no one had been appointed to preach. The superior turned first to the Dominicans, and asked that one of their number should address a few words to the assembled brethren; but everyone declined, saying he was not prepared. In their emergency they then chose Anthony, whom they thought only able to read the Missal and Breviary, and commanded him to speak whatever the spirit of God might put into his mouth. Anthony, compelled by obedience, spoke at first slowly and timidly, but soon enkindled with fervour, he began to explain the most hidden sense of Holy Scripture with such profound erudition and sublime doctrine that all were struck with astonishment. With that moment began Anthony's public career.

St. Francis, informed of his learning, directed him by the following letter to teach theology to the brethren:

To Brother Anthony, my bishop (i.e. teacher of sacred sciences), Brother Francis sends his greetings. It is my pleasure that thou teach theology to the brethren, provided, however, that as the Rule prescribes, the spirit of prayer and devotion may not be extinguished. Farewell. (1224)

Before undertaking the instruction, Anthony went for some time to Vercelli, to confer with the famous Abbot, Thomas Gallo; thence he taught successively in Bologna and Montpellier in 1224, and later at Toulouse. Nothing whatever is left of his instruction; the primitive documents, as well as the legendary ones, maintain complete silence on this point. Nevertheless, by studying his works, we can form for ourselves a sufficient idea of the character of his doctrine; a doctrine, namely, which, leaving aside all arid speculation, prefers an entirely seraphic character, corresponding to the spirit and ideal of St. Francis.

It was as an orator, however, rather than as professor, that Anthony reaped his richest harvest. He possessed in an eminent degree all the good qualities that characterize an eloquent preacher: a loud and clear voice, a winning countenance, wonderful memory, and profound learning, to which were added from on high the spirit of prophecy and an extraordinary gift of miracles. With the zeal of an apostle he undertook to reform the morality of his time by combating in an especial manner the vices of luxury, avarice, and tyranny. The fruit of his sermons was, therefore, as admirable as his eloquence itself. No less fervent was he in the extinction of heresy, notably that of the Cathares and the Patarines, which infested the centre and north of Italy, and probably also that of the Albigenses in the south of France, though we have no authorized documents to that effect. Among the many miracles St. Anthony wrought in the conversion of heretics, the three most noted recorded by his biographers are the following:

- The first is that of a horse, which, kept fasting for three days, refused the oats placed before him, till he had knelt down and adored the Blessed Sacrament, which St. Anthony held in his hands. Legendary narratives of the fourteenth century say this miracle took place at Toulouse, at Wadding, at Bruges; the real place, however, was Rimini.
- The second most important miracle is that of the poisoned food offered him by some Italian heretics, which he rendered innoxious by the sign of the cross.
- The third miracle worthy of mention is that of the famous sermon to the fishes on the bank of the river Brenta in the neighbourhood of Padua; not *at* Padua, as is generally supposed.

The zeal with which St. Anthony fought against heresy, and the great and numerous conversions he made rendered him worthy of the glorious title of *Malleus hereticorum* (Hammer of the Heretics). Though his preaching was always seasoned with the salt of discretion, nevertheless he spoke openly to all, to the rich as to the poor, to the people as well as those in authority. In a synod at

Bourges in the presence of many prelates, he reproved the Archbishop, Simon de Sully, so severely, that he induced him to sincere amendment.

After having been Guardian at Le-Puy (1224), we find Anthony in the year 1226, Custos Provincial in the province of Limousin. The most authentic miracles of that period are the following:

- Preaching one night on Holy Thursday in the Church of St. Pierre du Queriox at Limoges, he remembered he had to sing a Lesson of the Divine Office. Interrupting suddenly his discourse, he appeared at the same moment among the friars in choir to sing his Lesson, after which he continued his sermon.
- Another day preaching in the square *des creux des Arenes* at Limoges, he miraculously preserved his audience from the rain.
- At St. Junien during the sermon, he predicted that by an artifice of the devil the pulpit would break down, but that all should remain safe and sound. And so it occurred; for while he was preaching, the pulpit was overthrown, but no one hurt; not even the saint himself.
- In a monastery of Benedictines, where he had fallen ill, he delivered by means of his tunic one of the monks from great temptations.
- Likewise, by breathing on the face of a novice (whom he had himself received into the order), he confirmed him in his vocation.
- At Brive, where he had founded a convent, he preserved from the rain the maid-servant of a benefactress who was bringing some vegetables to the brethren for their meagre repast.

This is all that is historically certain of the sojourn of St. Anthony in Limousin.

Regarding the celebrated apparition of the Infant Jesus to our saint, French writers maintain it took place in the province of Limousin at the Castle of Chateauneuf-la-Forêt, between Limoges and Eymoutiers, whereas the Italian hagiographers fix the place at Camposanpiero, near Padua. The existing documents, however, do not decide the question. We have more certainty regarding the apparition of St. Francis to St. Anthony at the Provincial Chapter of Arles, whilst the latter was preaching about the mysteries of the Cross.

After the death of St. Francis, 3 October, 1226, Anthony returned to Italy. His way led him through La Provence on which occasion he wrought the following miracle: Fatigued by the journey, he and his companion entered the house of a poor woman, who placed bread and wine before them. She had forgotten, however, to shut off the tap of the wine-barrel, and to add to this misfortune, the Saint's companion broke his glass. Anthony began to pray, and suddenly the glass was made whole, and the barrel filled anew with wine.

Shortly after his return to Italy, Anthony was elected Minister Provincial of Emilia. But in order to devote more time to preaching, he resigned this office at the

General Chapter of Assisi, 30 May, 1230, and retired to the Convent of Padua, which he had himself founded. The last Lent he preached was that of 1231; the crowd of people which came from all parts to hear him, frequently numbered 30,000 and more. His last sermons were principally directed against hatred and enmity, and his efforts were crowned with wonderful success. Permanent reconciliations were effected, peace and concord re-established, liberty given to debtors and other prisoners, restitutions made, and enormous scandals repaired; in fact, the priests of Padua were no longer sufficient for the number of penitents, and many of these declared they had been warned by celestial visions, and sent to St. Anthony, to be guided by his counsel. Others after his death said that he appeared to them in their slumbers, admonishing them to go to confession.

At Padua also took place the famous miracle of the amputated foot, which Franciscan writers attribute to St. Anthony. A young man, Leonardo by name, in a fit of anger kicked his own mother. Repentant, he confessed his fault to St. Anthony who said to him: "The foot of him who kicks his mother deserves to be cut off." Leonardo ran home and cut off his foot. Learning of this, St. Anthony took the amputated member of the unfortunate youth and miraculously rejoined it.

Through the exertions of St. Anthony, the Municipality of Padua, 15 March, 1231, passed a law in favour of debtors who could not pay their debts. A copy of this law is still preserved in the museum of Padua. From this, as well as the following occurrence, the civil and religious importance of the Saint's influence in the thirteenth century is easily understood. In 1230, while war raged in Lombardy, St. Anthony betook himself to Verona to solicit from the ferocious Ezzelino the liberty of the Guelph prisoners. An apocryphal legend relates that the tyrant humbled himself before the Saint and granted his request. This is not the case, but what does it matter, even if he failed in his attempt; he nevertheless jeopardized his own life for the sake of those oppressed by tyranny, and thereby showed his love and sympathy for the people. Invited to preach at the funeral of a usurer, he took for his text the words of the Gospel: "Where thy treasure is, there also is thy heart." In the course of the sermon he said: "That rich man is dead and buried in hell; but go to his treasures and there you will find his heart." The relatives and friends of the deceased, led by curiosity, followed this injunction, and found the heart, still warm, among the coins. Thus the triumph of St. Anthony's missionary career manifests itself not only in his holiness and his numerous miracles, but also in the popularity and subject matter of his sermons, since he had to fight against the three most obstinate vices of luxury, avarice and tyranny.

At the end of Lent, 1231, Anthony retired to Camposanpiero, in the neighbourhood of Padua, where, after a short time he was taken with a severe illness. Transferred to Vercelli, and strengthened by the apparition of Our Lord, he died at the age of thirty-six years, on 13 June, 1231. He had lived fifteen years with his parents, ten years as a Canon Regular of St. Augustine, and eleven years in the Order of Friars Minor.

Immediately after his death he appeared at Vercelli to the Abbot, Thomas Gallo, and his death was also announced to the citizens of Padua by a troop of children, crying: "The holy Father is dead; St. Anthony is dead!" Gregory IX, firmly persuaded of his sanctity by the numerous miracles he had wrought, inscribed him within a year of his death (Pentecost, 30 May, 1232), in the calendar of saints of the Cathedral of Spoleto. In the Bull of canonization he declared he had personally known the saint, and we know that the same pontiff, having heard one of his sermons at Rome, and astonished at his profound knowledge of the Holy Scriptures called him: "Ark of the Covenant". That this title is well-founded is also shown by his several works: "Expositio in Psalmos", written at Montpellier, 1224; the "Sermones de tempore", and the "Sermones de Sanctis", written at Padua, 1229-30.

The name of Anthony became celebrated throughout the world, and with it the name of Padua. The inhabitants of that city erected to his memory a magnificent temple, whither his precious relics were transferred in 1263, in presence of St. Bonaventure, Minister General at the time. When the vault in which for thirty years his sacred body had reposed was opened, the flesh was found reduced to dust but the tongue uninjured, fresh, and of a lively red colour. St. Bonaventure, beholding this wonder, took the tongue affectionately in his hands and kissed it, exclaiming: "O Blessed Tongue that always praised the Lord, and made others bless Him, now it is evident what great merit thou hast before God."

The fame of St. Anthony's miracles has never diminished, and even at the present day he is acknowledged as the greatest thaumaturgist of the times. He is especially invoked for the recovery of things lost, as is also expressed in the celebrated responsory of Friar Julian of Spires:

Si quaeris miracula resque perditas.

Indeed his very popularity has to a certain extent obscured his personality. If we may believe the conclusions of recent critics, some of the Saint's biographers, in order to meet the ever-increasing demand for the marvellous displayed by his devout clients, and comparatively oblivious of the historical features of his life, have devoted themselves to the task of handing down to posterity the posthumous miracles wrought by his intercession. We need not be surprised, therefore, to find accounts of his miracles that may seem to the modern mind trivial or incredible occupying so large a space in the earlier biographies of St. Anthony. It may be true that some of the miracles attributed to St. Anthony are legendary, but others come to us on such high authority that it is impossible either to eliminate them or explain them away *a priori* without doing violence to the facts of history.

"Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints"

Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua

*O Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints,
thy love for God and Charity for His creatures,
made thee worthy, when on earth, to possess miraculous powers.
Encouraged by this thought,
I implore thee to obtain for me (request).
O gentle and loving St. Anthony,
whose heart was ever full of human sympathy,
whisper my petition into the ears of the sweet Infant Jesus,
Who didst love to be folded in thine arms;
and the gratitude of my heart will ever be thine.
Amen.*

Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua

Good Saint Anthony, in God's providence you have secured for His people many marvelous favors. You have been especially celebrated, good Saint Anthony, for your goodness to the poor and the hungry, for finding employment for those seeking it, for your special care of those who travel, and for keeping safe from harm all who must be away from home. You are widely known also, good Saint Anthony, for securing peace in the family, for your delicate mercy in finding lost things, for safe delivery of messages, and for your concern for women in childbirth. In honoring you, Saint Anthony, for the many graces our Lord grants through your favor, we trustfully and confidently ask your aid in our present need. Pray for us, good Saint Anthony, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

May it be a source of joy, O God, to your Church that we honor the memory of your Confessor and Doctor, Saint Anthony. May his spiritual help always make us strong, and by his assistance may we enjoy an eternal reward. This we ask through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua for Help

*O good and gentle Saint Anthony, your love of God and concern for His creatures made you worthy, while on earth, to possess miraculous powers. Come to my help in this moment of trouble and anxiety. Your ardent love of God made you worthy to hold the Holy Infant in your arms. Whisper to Him my humble request if it be for the greater glory of God, and the salvation of my soul. **Amen.***

Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua Servant of Charity

Dear Saint Anthony, God wants us to see Christ, our brother, in everyone and love Him truly in word and in deed. God wills that we share with others the joy of His boundless love. Saint Anthony, Generator of Charity, remember me in the Father's presence, that I may be generous in sharing the joy of His love. Remember also the special intentions I now entrust to you. (Name them)

*O God, send forth your Holy Spirit into my heart that I may perceive, into my mind that I may remember, and into my soul that I may meditate. Inspire me to speak with piety, holiness, tenderness, and mercy. Teach, guide, and direct my thoughts and senses from beginning to end. May your grace ever help and correct me, and may I be strengthened now with wisdom from on high, for the sake of your infinite mercy. **Amen.***

Prayer to Saint Anthony, Zealous for Justice

Dear St. Anthony, you were prompt to fulfill all justice. You gave God and His creation the service He required from you. You respected

other people's rights and treated them with kindness and understanding. St. Anthony, Zealous for Justice, teach me the beauty of this virtue. Make me prompt to fulfill all justice toward God and toward all creation. Help me also in my pressing needs. (Name them.)

Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua, Lover of Sacred Scripture, Lover of Charity

Teacher of the Gospel, light of holy Church, lover of souls, good St. Anthony of Padua help us to have a true and solid devotion to you, and to imitate your life and work for God and souls. Grant us a greater love for Holy Scripture, the source of your wisdom. Be to us a teacher of the ways of God and of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Light our hearts with the flame of love, the fire of divine charity, that we may love our merciful Father in heaven; that the King of kings, as you said, may reign in our hearts and purify them of all evil; that we may love our neighbor as you commanded. May the example of your chastity, your spirit of prayer, make us faithful to the vows of our baptism, to the vows of marriage or of religious life.

Guide us so that we may live with you the Gospel of Christ and grow with you in Him. Pray that the spirit of the Gospel may reach all men of all nations, beginning with ourselves. Pray that the spirit of Christian love and unity may fill the people of God, and bring all His children together again as one flock with one Shepherd. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua, Patron of Seekers of Lost Articles

Dear Saint Anthony, you are the patron of the poor and the helper of all who seek lost articles. Help me to find the object I have lost so that

I will be able to make better use of the time I will gain for God's greater honor and glory. Grant your gracious aid to all people who seek what they have lost - especially those who seek to regain God's grace. Amen.

Prayer of Thanks for Favors Received

Most loving protector, great St. Anthony, I hasten to thank you. Full of appreciation and profound gratitude I acknowledge the favors you have secured for me in reply to my prayers. Because you answered my petitions, I rejoice in your power with God and your unfailing goodness to your brothers in Christ. May you ever be honored and blessed, most powerful wonder-worker of Padua! May your merits and favors remain an unending hymn of praise to the most Holy Trinity, and to our Blessed Mother. Amen.

Pray 1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary, and 1 Glory be....

Seeking a Lost Article

Dear St. Anthony, you are the patron of the poor and the helper of all who seek lost articles. Help me to find the object I have lost so that I will be able to make better use of the time that I will gain for God's greater honor and glory. Grant your gracious aid to all people who seek what they have lost---especially those who seek to regain God's grace. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving for Graces and Favors Received

Most loving protector, St. Anthony, what gift can I give you in exchange to show my heartfelt gratitude? With your continued help I

*will show appreciation to you by being more faithful to God, more constant in my prayer, and readier to do good to those nearest me. I praise you for the esteem in which your name is held throughout the world, for the miracles and wonders with which you have filled the Church and the world, and for the many benefits men keep receiving through your gracious help. May these intentions convey my great thanks to the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to our Blessed Mother, Queen of Heaven and Earth. **Amen.***

Pray 1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary, and 1 Glory be....

To Find a Lost Article

*St. Anthony, perfect imitator of Jesus, who received from God the special power of restoring lost things, grant that I may find (name your lost item) which has been lost. At least restore to me peace and tranquility of mind, the loss of which has afflicted me even more than my material loss. To this favor, I ask another of you: that I may always remain in possession of the true good that is God. Let me rather lose all things than lose God, my supreme good. Let me never suffer the loss of my greatest treasure, eternal life with God. **Amen.***

Chaplet of St. Anthony

This chaplet is composed of 13 decades of 3 blue beads each. On the first bead of each decade is said 1 Our Father, on the second the Hail Mary, and on the third the Glory be. At the end the Miraculous Responsory is recited.

The Miraculous Responsory (by St. Bonaventure)

*If miracles thou vain would see;
Lo, error, death, calamity.
The leprous stain, the demon flies,
From beds of pain the sick arise.*

*The hungry seas forgo their prey,
The prisoner's cruel chains give way;
While palsied limbs and chattels lost
Both young and old recovered boast.*

*And perils perish, plenty's hoard,
Is heaped on hunger's famished board;
Let those relate who know it well,
Let Padua of her patron tell.
The hungry seas forgo their prey,
The prisoner's cruel chains give way;
While palsied limbs and chattels lost
Both young and old recovered boast.*

Glory be the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

*The hungry seas forgo their prey,
The prisoner's cruel chains give way;
While palsied limbs and chattels lost
Both young and old recovered boast.*

V/. Pray for us, blessed Anthony,

R/. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray

O God,

*let the notive commemoration of Blessed Anthony,
Thy confessor,
be a source of joy in Thy Church,
that she may always be fortified with spiritual assistance,
and may deserve to possess eternal joy.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Litany of St. Anthony

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy. Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God, the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us.

St. Anthony of Padua, pray for us.

St. Anthony, glory of the Friars Minor, pray for us.

St. Anthony, ark of the testament, pray for us.

St. Anthony, sanctuary of heavenly wisdom, pray for us.

St. Anthony, destroyer of worldly vanity, pray for us.

St. Anthony, conqueror of impurity, pray for us.

St. Anthony, example of humility, pray for us.

St. Anthony, lover of the Cross, pray for us.

St. Anthony, martyr of desire, pray for us.

St. Anthony, generator of charity, pray for us.

St. Anthony, zealous for justice, pray for us.

St. Anthony, terror of infidels, pray for us.

St. Anthony, model of perfection, pray for us.

St. Anthony, consoler of the afflicted, pray for us.

St. Anthony, restorer of lost things, pray for us.

St. Anthony, defender of innocence, pray for us.

St. Anthony, liberator of prisoners, pray for us.

St. Anthony, guide of pilgrims, pray for us.

St. Anthony, restorer of health, pray for us.

St. Anthony, performer of miracles, pray for us.

St. Anthony, restorer of speech to the mute, pray for us.

St. Anthony, restorer of hearing to the deaf, pray for us.

St. Anthony, restorer of sight to the blind, pray for us.

St. Anthony, disperser of devils, pray for us.

St. Anthony, reviver of the dead, pray for us.

St. Anthony, tamer of tyrants, pray for us.

From the snares of the devil, St. Anthony deliver us.

From thunder, lightning and storms, St. Anthony deliver us.

From all evil of body and soul, St. Anthony deliver us.

Through your intercession, St. Anthony protect us.

Throughout the course of life, St. Anthony protect us.

*Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.*

*Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.*

*Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.*

V. St. Anthony, pray for us.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

*Let us pray: O my God, may the pious commemoration of St. Anthony,
Your Confessor and Doctor, give joy to Your Church, that she may
ever be strengthened with Your spiritual assistance and merit to
attain everlasting joy. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.***

St. Anthony, Saint Anthony, Come Down!

St. Anthony, St. Anthony

Please come down

Something is lost

And can't be found

Please, St. Anthony,

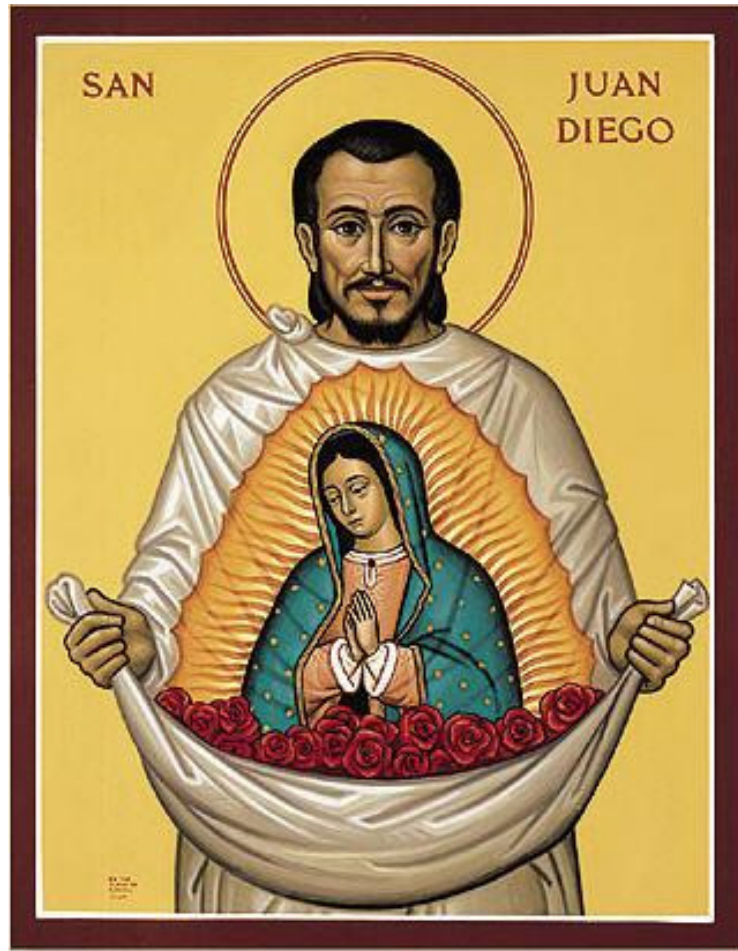
look around.

Dear St. Anthony,

*I pray
Bring it back,
without delay.*

**Icon of
Saint Juan Diego
Cuauhtlatatzin**

(1474-1548)



The Apparitions and the Miracle

St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatontzin (1474-1548). Little is known about the life of Juan Diego before his conversion, but tradition and archaeological and iconographical sources, along with the most important and oldest indigenous document on the event of Guadalupe, "*El Nican Mopohua*" (written in Náhuatl with Latin characters, 1556, by the Indigenous writer Antonio Valeriano), give some information on the life of the saint and the apparitions.

Juan Diego was born in 1474 with the name "Cuauhtlatontzin" ("the talking eagle") in Cuautlitlán, today part of Mexico City, Mexico. He was a gifted member of the Chichimeca people, one of the more culturally advanced groups living in the Anáhuac Valley.

When he was 50 years old he was baptized by a Franciscan priest, Fr Peter da Gand, one of the first Franciscan missionaries. On 9 December 1531, when Juan Diego was on his way to morning Mass, the Blessed Mother appeared to him on Tepeyac Hill, the outskirts of what is now Mexico City. She asked him to go to the Bishop and to request in her name that a shrine be built at Tepeyac, where she promised to pour out her grace upon those who invoked her. The Bishop, who did not believe Juan Diego, asked for a sign to prove that the apparition was true. On 12 December, Juan Diego returned to Tepeyac. Here, the Blessed Mother told him to climb the hill and to pick the flowers that he would find in bloom. He obeyed, and although it was winter time, he found roses flowering. He gathered the flowers and took them to Our Lady who carefully placed them in his mantle and told him to take them to the Bishop as "proof". When he opened his mantle, the flowers fell on the ground and there remained impressed, in place of the flowers, an image of the Blessed Mother, the apparition at Tepeyac.

With the Bishop's permission, Juan Diego lived the rest of his life as a hermit in a small hut near the chapel where the miraculous image was placed for veneration. Here he cared for the church and the first pilgrims who came to pray to the Mother of Jesus.

Much deeper than the "exterior grace" of having been "chosen" as Our Lady's "messenger", Juan Diego received the grace of interior enlightenment and from that moment, he began a life dedicated to prayer and the practice of virtue and boundless love of God and neighbour. He died in 1548 and was buried in the first chapel dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe. He was beatified on 6 May 1990 by Pope John Paul II in the Basilica of *Santa Maria di Guadalupe*, Mexico City.

The miraculous image, which is preserved in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, shows a woman with native features and dress. She is supported by an angel whose wings are reminiscent of one of the major gods of the traditional religion of that area. The moon is beneath her feet and her blue mantle is covered with gold stars. The black girdle about her waist signifies that she is pregnant. Thus, the image graphically depicts the fact that Christ is to be "born" again

among the peoples of the New World, and is a message as relevant to the "New World" today as it was during the lifetime of Juan Diego.

Ten years after the seizure of the city of Mexico, war came to an end and there was peace amongst the people; in this manner faith started to bud, the understanding of the true God, for whom we live. At that time, in the year fifteen hundred and thirty one, in the early days of the month of December, it happened that there lived a poor Indian, named Juan Diego, said being a native of Cuautitlan. Of all things spiritually he belonged to Tlatilolco.

FIRST APPARITION

On a Saturday just before dawn, he was on his way to pursue divine worship and to engage in his own errands. As he reached the base of the hill known as Tepeyac, came the break of day, and he heard singing atop the hill, resembling singing of varied beautiful birds. Occasionally the voices of the songsters would cease, and it appeared as if the mount responded. The song, very mellow and delightful, excelled that of the coyoltototl and the tzinizcan and of other pretty singing birds. Juan Diego stopped to look and said to himself: "By fortune, am I worthy of what I hear? Maybe I dream? Am I awakening? Where am I? Perhaps I am now in the terrestrial paradise which our elders had told us about? Perhaps I am now in heaven?" He was looking toward the east, on top of the mound, from whence came the precious celestial chant; and then it suddenly ceased and there was silence. He then heard a voice from above the mount saying to him: "*Juanito, Juan Dieguito.*" Then he ventured and went to where he was called. He was not frightened in the least; on the contrary, overjoyed.

Then he climbed the hill, to see from where he was being called. When he reached the summit, he saw a Lady, who was standing there and told him to come hither. Approaching her presence, he marveled greatly at her superhuman grandeur; her garments were shining like the sun; the cliff where she rested her feet, pierced with glitter, resembling an anklet of precious stones, and the earth sparkled like the rainbow. The mezquites, nopales, and other different weeds, which grow there, appeared like emeralds, their foliage like turquoise, and their branches and thorns glistened like gold. He bowed before

her and heard her word, tender and courteous, like someone who charms and steems you highly.

She said: *“Juanito, the most humble of my sons, where are you going?”* He replied: “My Lady and Child, I have to reach your church in Mexico, Tlatilolco, to pursue things divine, taught and given to us by our priests, delegates of Our Lord.” She then spoke to him: *“Know and understand well, you the most humble of my son, that I am the ever virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the True God for whom we live, of the Creator of all things, Lord of heaven and the earth. I wish that a temple be erected here quickly, so I may therein exhibit and give all my love, compassion, help, and protection, because I am your merciful mother, to you, and to all the inhabitants on this land and all the rest who love me, invoke and confide in me; listen there to their lamentations, and remedy all their miseries, afflictions and sorrows. And to accomplish what my clemency pretends, go to the palace of the bishop of Mexico, and you will say to him that I manifest my great desire, that here on this plain a temple be built to me; you will accurately relate all you have seen and admired, and what you have heard. Be assured that I will be most grateful and will reward you, because I will make you happy and worthy of recompense for the effort and fatigue in what you will obtain of what I have entrusted. Behold, you have heard my mandate, my humble son; go and put forth all your effort.”*

At this point he bowed before her and said: “My Lady, I am going to comply with your mandate; now I must part from you, I, your humble servant.” Then he descended to go to comply with the errand, and went by the avenue which runs directly into Mexico City.

SECOND APPARITION

Having entered the city, and without delay, he went straight to the bishop's palace, who was the recently arrived prelate named Father Juan de Zumarraga, a Franciscan religious. On arrival, he endeavored to see him; he pleaded with the servants to announce him; and after a long wait, he was called and advised that the bishop had ordered his admission. As he entered, he bowed, and on bended knees before him, he then delivered the message from the lady from heaven; he also told him all he had admired, seen, and heard. After having heard his chat and message, it appeared incredible; then he told him: "You will return, my son, and I will hear you at my pleasure. I will review it from the beginning and will give thought to the wishes and desires for which you have come." He left and he seemed sad, because his message had not been realized in any of its forms.

He returned on the same day. He came directly to the top of the hill, met the Lady from heaven, who was awaiting him, in the same spot where he saw her the first time. Seeing her, prostrated before her, he said: "Lady, the least of my daughters, my Child, I went where you sent me to comply with your command. With difficulty I entered the prelate's study. I saw him and exposed your message, just as you instructed me. He received me benevolently and listened attentively, but when he replied, it appeared that he did not believe me. He said: "You will return; I will hear you at my pleasure. I will review from the beginning the wish and desire which you have brought." I perfectly understood by the manner he replied that he believes it to be an invention of mine that you wish that a temple be built here to you, and that it is not your order; for which I exceedingly beg, Lady and my Child, that you entrust the delivery of your message to someone of importance, well known, respected, and esteemed, so that they may believe in him; because I am a nobody, I am a small rope, a tiny ladder, the tail end, a leaf, and you, my Child, the least of my children, my Lady, you send me to a place where I never visit nor repose. Please excuse the great unpleasantness and let not fretfulness befall, my Lady and my All."

The Blessed Virgin answered: *"Hark, my son the least, you must understand that I have many servants and messengers, to whom I must entrust the delivery of my*

message, and carry my wish, but it is of precise detail that you yourself solicit and assist and that through your mediation my wish be complied. I earnestly implore, my son the least, and with sternness I command that you again go tomorrow and see the bishop. You go in my name, and make known my wish in its entirety that he has to start the erection of a temple which I ask of him. And again tell him that I, in person, the ever-virgin Holy Mary, Mother of God, sent you."

Juan Diego replied: "Lady, my Child, let me not cause you affliction. Gladly and willingly I will go to comply your mandate. Under no condition will I fail to do it, for not even the way is distressing. I will go to do your wish, but perhaps I will not be heard with liking, or if I am heard I might not be believed. Tomorrow afternoon, at sunset, I will come to bring you the result of your message with the prelate's reply. I now take leave, my Child, the least, my Child and Lady. Rest in the meantime." He then left to rest in his home.

THIRD APPARITION

The next day, Sunday, before dawn, he left home on his way to Tlatilolco, to be instructed in things divine, and to be present for roll call, following which he had to see the prelate. Nearly at ten, and swiftly, after hearing Mass and being counted and the crowd had dispersed, he went. On the hour Juan Diego left for the palace of the bishop. Hardly had he arrived, he eagerly tried to see him. Again with much difficulty he was able to see him. He kneeled before his feet. He saddened and cried as he expounded the mandate of the Lady from heaven, which God grant he would believe his message, and the wish of the Immaculate, to erect her temple where she willed it to be. The bishop, to assure himself, asked many things, where he had seen her and how she looked; and he described everything perfectly to the bishop. Notwithstanding his precise explanation of her figure and all that he had seen and admired, which in itself reflected her as being the ever-virgin Holy Mother of the Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ, nevertheless, he did not give credence and said that not only

for his request he had to do what he had asked; that, in addition, a sign was very necessary, so that he could be believed that he was sent by the true Lady from heaven. Therefore, he was heard, said Juan Diego to the bishop: "My lord, hark! what must be the sign that you ask? For I will go to ask the Lady from heaven who sent me here." The bishop, seeing that he ratified everything without doubt and was not retracting anything, dismissed him. Immediately he ordered some persons of his household, in whom he could trust, to go and watch where he went and whom he saw and to whom he spoke. So it was done. Juan Diego went straight to the avenue. Those that followed him, as they crossed the ravine, near the bridge to Tepeyacac, lost sight of him. They searched everywhere, but he could not be seen. Thus they returned, not only because they were disgusted, but also because they were hindered in their intent, causing them anger. And that is what they informed the bishop, influencing him not to believe Juan Diego; they told him that he was being deceived; that Juan Diego was only forging what he was saying, or that he was simply dreaming what he said and asked. They finally schemed that if he ever returned, they would hold and punish him harshly, so that he would never lie or deceive again.

In the meantime, Juan Diego was with the Blessed Virgin, relating the answer he was bringing from his lordship, the bishop. The lady, having heard, told him: *"Well and good, my little dear, you will return here tomorrow, so you may take to the bishop the sign he has requested. With this he will believe you, and in this regard he will not doubt you nor will he be suspicious of you; and know, my little dear, that I will reward your solicitude and effort and fatigue spent of my behalf. Lo! go now. I will await you here tomorrow."*

FOURTH APPARITION

On the following day, Monday, when Juan Diego was to carry a sign so he could be believed, he failed to return, because, when he reached his home, his uncle, named Juan Bernardino, had become sick, and was gravely ill. First he summoned a doctor who aided him; but it was too late, he was gravely ill. By nightfall, his uncle requested

that by break of day he go to Tlatilolco and summon a priest, to prepare him and hear his confession, because he was certain it was time for him to die, and that he would not arise or get well.

On Tuesday, before dawn, Juan Diego came from his home to Tlatilolco to summon a priest; and as he approached the road which joins the slope to Tepeyacac hilltop, toward the west, where he was accustomed to cross, said: "If I proceed forward, the Lady is bound to see me, and I may be detained, so I may take the sign to the prelate, as prearranged; that our first affliction must let us go hurriedly to call a priest, as my poor uncle certainly awaits him." Then he rounded the hill, going around, so he could not be seen by her who sees well everywhere. He saw her descend from the top of the hill and was looking toward where they previously met. She approached him at the side of the hill and said to him: *"What's there, my son the least? Where are you going?"* Was he grieved, or ashamed, or scared? He bowed before her. He saluted, saying: "My Child, the most tender of my daughters, Lady, God grant you are content. How are you this morning? Is your health good, Lady and my Child? I am going to cause you grief. Know, my Child, that a servant of yours is very sick, my uncle. He has contracted the plague, and is near death. I am hurrying to your house in Mexico to call one of your priests, beloved by our Lord, to hear his confession and absolve him, because, since we were born, we came to guard the work of our death. But if I go, I shall return here soon, so I may go to deliver your message. Lady and my Child, forgive me, be patient with me for the time being. I will not deceive you, the least of my daughters. Tomorrow I will come in all haste."

After hearing Juan Diego's chat, the Most Holy Virgin answered: *"Hear me and understand well, my son the least, that nothing should frighten or grieve you. Let not your heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here, who is your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within my fold? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything. Do not be afflicted by the illness of your*

uncle, who will not die now of it. be assured that he is now cured." (And then his uncle was cured, as it was later learned.)

When Juan Diego heard these words from the Lady from heaven, he was greatly consoled. He was happy. He begged to be excused to be off to see the bishop, to take him the sign or proof, so that he might be believed. The Lady from heaven ordered to climb to the top of the hill, where they previously met. She told him: *"Climb, my son the least, to the top of the hill; there where you saw me and I gave you orders, you will find different flowers. Cut them, gather them, assemble them, then come and bring them before my presence."* Immediately Juan Diego climbed the hill, and as he reached the summit, he was amazed that so many varieties of exquisite rosas de Castilla were blooming, long before the time when they are to bud, because, being out of season, they would freeze. They were very fragrant and covered with dewdrops of the night, which resembled precious pearls. Immediately he started cutting them. He gathered them all and placed them in his tilma. The hilltop was no place for any kind of flowers to grow, because it had many crags, thistles, thorns, nopales and mezquites. Occasionally weeds would grow, but it was then the month of December, in which all vegetation is destroyed by freezing. He immediately went down the hill and brought the different roses which he had cut to the Lady from heaven, who, as she saw them, took them with her hand and again placed them back in the tilma, saying: *"My son the least, this diversity of roses is the proof and the sign which you will take to the bishop. You will tell him in my name that he will see in them my wish and that he will have to comply to it. You are my ambassador, most worthy of all confidence. Rigorously I command you that only before the presence of the bishop will you unfold your mantle and disclose what you are carrying. You will relate all and well; you will tell that I ordered you to climb to the hilltop, to go and cut flowers; and all that you*

saw and admired, so you can induce the prelate to give his support, with the aim that a temple be built and erected as I have asked.”

After the Lady from heaven had given her advice, he was on his way by the avenue that goes directly to Mexico; being happy and assured of success, carrying with great care what he bore in his tilma, being careful; that nothing would slip from his hands, and enjoying the fragrance of the variety of the beautiful flowers.

THE MIRACLE OF THE IMAGE

When he reached the bishop's palace, there came to meet him the majordomo and other servants of the prelate. He begged them to tell the bishop that he wished to see him, but none were willing, pretending not to hear him, probably because it was too early, or because they already knew him as being of the molesting type, because he was pestering them; and, moreover, they had been advised by their co-workers that they had lost sight of him, when they had followed him.

He waited a long time. When they saw that he had been there a long time, standing, crestfallen, doing nothing, waiting to be called, and appearing like he had something which he carried in his tilma, they came near him, to see what he had and to satisfy themselves. Juan Diego, seeing that he could not hide what he had, and on account of that he would be molested, pushed or mauled, uncovered his tilma a little, and there were the flowers; and upon seeing that they were all different rosas de Castilla, and out of season, they were thoroughly amazed, also because they were so fresh and in full bloom, so fragrant and so beautiful. They tried to seize and pull some out, but they were not successful the three times they dared to take them. They were not lucky because when then tried to get them, they were unable to see real flowers. Instead, they appeared painted or stamped or sewn on the cloth. Then they went to tell the bishop what they had seen and that the Indian who had come so many times wished to see him, and that he had reason enough so long anxiously eager to see him.

Upon hearing, the bishop realized that what he carried was the proof, to confirm and comply with what the Indian requested. Immediately he ordered his admission. As he entered, Juan Diego knelt before him, as he was accustomed to do, and again related what he had seen and admired, also the message. He said: "Sir, I did what you ordered, to go forth and tell my Ama, the Lady from heaven, Holy Mary, precious Mother of God, that you asked for a sign so that you might believe me that you should build a temple where she asked it to be erected; also, I told her that I had given you my word that I would bring some sign and proof, which you requested, of her wish. She condescended to your request and graciously granted your request, some sign and proof to complement her wish. Early today she again sent me to see you; I asked for the sign so you might believe me, as she had said that she would give it, and she complied. She sent me to the top of the hill, where I was accustomed to see her, and to cut a variety of rosas de Castilla. After I had cut them, I brought them, she took them with her hand and placed them in my cloth, so that I bring them to you and deliver them to you in person. Even though I knew that the hilltop was no place where flowers would grow, because there are many crags, thistles, thorns, nopales and mezquites, I still had my doubts. As I approached the top of the hill, I saw that I was in paradise, where there was a great variety of exquisite rosas de Castilla, in brilliant dew, which I immediately cut. She had told me that I should bring them to you, and so I do it, so that you may see in them the sign which you asked of me and comply with her wish; also, to make clear the veracity of my word and my message. Behold. Receive them."

He unfolded his white cloth, where he had the flowers; and when they scattered on the floor, all the different varieties of rosas de Castilla, suddenly there appeared the drawing of the precious Image of the ever-virgin Holy Mary, Mother of God, in the manner as she is today kept in the temple at Tepeyacac, which is named Guadalupe. When the bishop saw the image, he and all who were present fell to their knees. She was greatly admired. They arose to see her; they shuddered and, with sorrow, they demonstrated that they contemplated her with their hearts and minds. The bishop, with sorrowful tears, prayed and begged forgiveness for not having attended her wish and request. When he rose to his feet, he untied from Juan Diego's neck the cloth on which appeared the Image of the

Lady from heaven. Then he took it to be placed in his chapel. Juan Diego remained one more day in the bishop's house, at his request.

The following day he told him: Well! show us where the Lady from heaven wished her temple be erected." Immediately, he invited all those present to go.

APPARITION TO JUAN BERNARDINO

As Juan Diego pointed out the spot where the lady from heaven wanted her temple built, he begged to be excused. He wished to go home to see his uncle Juan Bernardino, who was gravely ill when he left him to go to Tlatilolco to summon a priest, to hear his confession and absolve him. The Lady from heaven had told him that he had been cured. But they did not let him go alone, and accompanied him to his home.

As they arrived, they saw that his uncle was very happy and nothing ailed him. He was greatly amazed to see his nephew so accompanied and honored, asking the reason of such honors conferred upon him. His nephew answered that when he went to summon a priest to hear his confession and to absolve him, the Lady from heaven appeared to him at Tepeyacac, telling him not to be afflicted, that his uncle was well, for which he was greatly consoled, and she sent him to Mexico, to see the bishop, to build her a house in Tepeyacac.

Then the uncle manifested that it was true that on that occasion he became well and that he had seen her in the same manner as she had appeared to his nephew, knowing through her that she had sent him to Mexico to see the bishop. Also, the Lady told him that when he would go to see the bishop, to reveal to him what he had seen and to explain the miraculous manner in which she had cured him, and that she would properly be named, and known as the blessed Image, the ever-virgin Holy Mary of Guadalupe.

Juan Bernardino was brought before the presence of the bishop to inform and testify before him. Both he and his nephew were the guests of the bishop in his home for some days, until the temple

dedicated to the Queen of Tepeyacac was erected where Juan Diego had seen her.

The bishop transferred the sacred Image of the lovely lady from heaven to the main church, taking her from his private chapel where it was, so that the people would see and admire her blessed Image. The entire city was aroused; they came to see and admire the devout Image, and to pray. They marveled at the fact that she appeared as did her divine miracle, because no living person of this world had painted her precious Image.



*"Let not your heart be disturbed.
Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish.
Am I not here, who is your Mother?
Are you not under my protection?
Am I not your health?
Are you not happily within my fold?
What else do you wish?
Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything."
(Words of Our Lady to Juan Diego)*

CANONIZATION OF JUAN DIEGO CUAUHTLATOATZIN

HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II

Mexico City, Wednesday July 31, 2002

1. *"I thank you, Father ... that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was your gracious will" (Mt 11:25-26).*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

These words of Jesus in today's Gospel are a special invitation to us to praise and thank God for the gift of the first indigenous Saint of the American Continent.

With deep joy I have come on pilgrimage to this Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Marian heart of Mexico and of America, to proclaim the holiness of Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, the simple, humble Indian who contemplated the sweet and serene face of Our Lady of Tepeyac, so dear to the people of Mexico.

2. *I am grateful for the kind words of Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera, Archbishop of Mexico City, and for the warm hospitality of the*

people of this Primate Archdiocese: my cordial greeting goes to everyone. I also greet with affection Cardinal Ernesto Corripio Ahumada, Archbishop Emeritus of Mexico City, and the other Cardinals, as well as the Bishops of Mexico, of America, of the Philippines and of other places in the world. I am likewise particularly grateful to the President and the civil Authorities for their presence at this celebration.

Today I address a very affectionate greeting to the many indigenous people who have come from the different regions of the country, representing the various ethnic groups and cultures which make up the rich, multifaceted Mexican reality. The Pope expresses his closeness to them, his deep respect and admiration, and receives them fraternally in the Lord's name.

3. What was Juan Diego like? Why did God look upon him? The Book of Sirach, as we have heard, teaches us that God alone "is mighty; he is glorified by the humble" (cf. Sir 3:20). Saint Paul's words, also proclaimed at this celebration, shed light on the divine way of bringing about salvation: "God chose what is low and despised in the world... so that no human being might boast in the presence of God" (1 Cor 1:28,29).

It is moving to read the accounts of Guadalupe, sensitively written and steeped in tenderness. In them the Virgin Mary, the handmaid "who glorified the Lord" (Lk 1:46), reveals herself to Juan Diego as the Mother of the true God. As a sign, she gives him precious roses, and as he shows them to the Bishop, he discovers the blessed image of Our Lady imprinted on his tilma.

"The Guadalupe Event", as the Mexican Episcopate has pointed out, "meant the beginning of evangelization with a vitality that surpassed all expectations. Christ's message, through his Mother, took up the central elements of the indigenous culture, purified them and gave them the definitive sense of salvation" (14 May 2002, No. 8). Consequently Guadalupe and Juan

Diego have a deep ecclesial and missionary meaning and are a model of perfectly inculturated evangelization.

4. "The Lord looks down from heaven, he sees all the sons of men" (Ps 33:13), we recited with the Psalmist, once again confessing our faith in God, who makes no distinctions of race or culture. In accepting the Christian message without forgoing his indigenous identity, Juan Diego discovered the profound truth of the new humanity, in which all are called to be children of God. Thus he facilitated the fruitful meeting of two worlds and became the catalyst for the new Mexican identity, closely united to Our Lady of Guadalupe, whose mestizo face expresses her spiritual motherhood which embraces all Mexicans. This is why the witness of his life must continue to be the inspiration for the building up of the Mexican nation, encouraging brotherhood among all its children and ever helping to reconcile Mexico with its origins, values and traditions.

The noble task of building a better Mexico, with greater justice and solidarity, demands the cooperation of all. In particular, it is necessary today to support the indigenous peoples in their legitimate aspirations, respecting and defending the authentic values of each ethnic group. Mexico needs its indigenous peoples and these peoples need Mexico!

Beloved brothers and sisters of every ethnic background of Mexico and America, today, in praising the Indian Juan Diego, I want to express to all of you the closeness of the Church and the Pope, embracing you with love and encouraging you to overcome with hope the difficult times you are going through.

5. At this decisive moment in Mexico's history, having already crossed the threshold of the new millennium, I entrust to the powerful intercession of Saint Juan Diego the joys and hopes, the fears and anxieties of the beloved Mexican people, whom I carry in my heart.

Blessed Juan Diego, a good, Christian Indian, whom simple people have always considered a saint! We ask you to accompany the Church on her pilgrimage in Mexico, so that she may be more evangelizing and more missionary each day. Encourage the Bishops, support the

priests, inspire new and holy vocations, help all those who give their lives to the cause of Christ and the spread of his Kingdom.

Happy Juan Diego, true and faithful man! We entrust to you our lay brothers and sisters so that, feeling the call to holiness, they may imbue every area of social life with the spirit of the Gospel. Bless families, strengthen spouses in their marriage, sustain the efforts of parents to give their children a Christian upbringing. Look with favour upon the pain of those who are suffering in body or in spirit, on those afflicted by poverty, loneliness, marginalization or ignorance. May all people, civic leaders and ordinary citizens, always act in accordance with the demands of justice and with respect for the dignity of each person, so that in this way peace may be reinforced.

Beloved Juan Diego, "the talking eagle"! Show us the way that leads to the "Dark Virgin" of Tepeyac, that she may receive us in the depths of her heart, for she is the loving, compassionate Mother who guides us to the true God. Amen.

After the celebration, before imparting the final blessing the Holy Father said:

At the end of the canonization of Juan Diego, I want to renew my greeting to all of you who have been able to take part, some in this basilica, others in the nearby areas and many others by means of radio and television. I warmly thank all those I have met in the streets for their affection. In this new saint you have a marvellous example of a just and upright man, a loyal son of the Church, docile to his Pastors, who deeply loved the Virgin and was a faithful disciple of Jesus. May he be a model for you who are so attached to him, and may he intercede for Mexico so that it may always be faithful! Take to all Mexicans the message of this celebration and the Pope's greeting and love for them all!



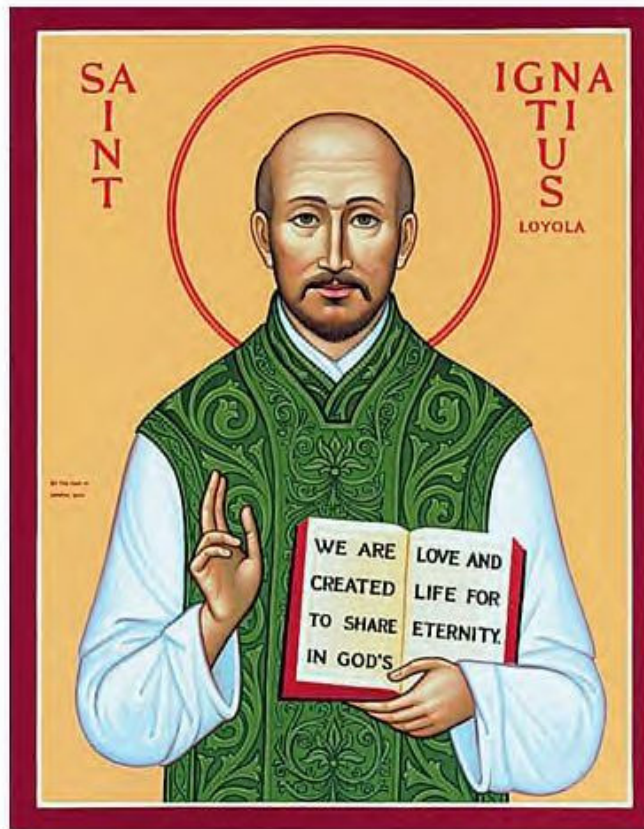
Prayer to Saint Juan Diego

Dearest Juan Diego, you faced the skepticism and rejection of a bishop and the crowds to bring Mary's message to Mexico. Pray for us that when we are faced with obstacles to our faith we may show that same courage and commitment. Amen.

Prayer of Our Lady of Guadalupe

God, Who hast willed that, placed as we are under the especial patronage of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, we should receive an abundant measure of unceasing favors: grant to us, Thy suppliant people, whose joy it is this day to honor her upon earth, for evermore to be made happy by seeing her in Heaven. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

Icon of Saint Ignatius Loyola



Youngest son of Don Beltrán Yañez de Oñez y Loyola and Marina Saenz de Lieona y Balda (the name López de Recalde, though accepted by the Bollandist Father Pien, is a copyist's blunder).

Born in 1491 at the castle of Loyola above Azpeitia in Guipuscoa; died at Rome, 31 July, 1556. The family arms are: per pale, or, seven bends gules (?vert) for Oñez; argent, pot and chain sable between two grey wolves rampant, for Loyola. The saint was baptized Iñigo, after St. Enecus (Innicus), Abbot of Oña: the name Ignatius was assumed in later years, while he was residing in Rome. For the saint's genealogy, see Pérez (op. cit. below, 131); Michel (op. cit. below, II, 383); Polanco (Chronicon, I, 51646). For the date of birth cfr. Astráin, I, 3 S.

I. CONVERSION (1491-1521)

At an early age he was made a cleric. We do not know when, or why he was released from clerical obligations. He was brought up in the household of Juan Velásquez de Cuellar, *contador mayor* to Ferdinand and Isabella, and in his suite probably attended the court from time to time, though not in the royal service. This was perhaps the time of his greatest dissipation and laxity. He was affected and extravagant about his hair and dress, consumed with the desire of winning glory, and would seem to have been sometimes involved in those darker intrigues, for which handsome young courtiers too often think themselves licensed. How far he went on the downward course is still unproved. The balance of evidence tends to show that his own subsequent humble confessions of having been a great sinner should not be treated as pious exaggerations. But we have no details, not even definite charges. In 1517 a change for the better seems to have taken place; Velásquez died and Ignatius took service in the army. The turning-point of his life came in 1521. While the French were besieging the citadel of Pampeluna, a cannon ball, passing between Ignatius' legs, tore open the left calf and broke the right shin (Whit-Tuesday, 20 May, 1521). With his fall the garrison lost heart and surrendered, but he was well treated by the French and carried on a litter to Loyola, where his leg had to be rebroken and reset, and afterwards a protruding end of the bone was sawn off, and the limb, having been shortened by clumsy setting, was stretched out by weights. All these pains were undergone voluntarily, without uttering a cry or submitting to be bound. But the pain and weakness which followed were so great that the patient began to fail and sink. On the eve of Sts. Peter and Paul, however, a turn for the better took place, and he threw off his fever.

So far Ignatius had shown none but the ordinary virtues of the Spanish officer. His dangers and sufferings has doubtless done much to purge his soul, but there was no idea yet of remodelling his life on any higher ideals. Then, in order to divert the weary hours of convalescence, he asked for the romances of chivalry, his favourite reading, but there were none in the castle, and instead they brought him the lives of Christ and of the saints, and he read them in the same quasi-competitive spirit with which he read the achievements of knights and warriors. "Suppose I were to rival this saint in fasting, that one in endurance, that other in pilgrimages." He would then wander off into thoughts of chivalry, and service to fair ladies, especially to one of high rank, whose name is unknown. Then all of a sudden, he became conscious that the after-effect of these dreams was to make him dry and dissatisfied, while the ideas of falling into rank among the saints braced and strengthened him, and left him full of joy and peace. Next it dawned on him that the former ideas were of the world, the latter God-sent; finally, worldly thoughts began to lose their hold, while heavenly ones grew clearer and dearer. One night as he lay awake, pondering these new lights, "he saw clearly", so says his autobiography, "the image of Our Lady with the Holy Child Jesus", at whose sight for a notable time he felt a reassuring sweetness, which eventually left him with such a loathing of his past sins, and especially for those of the flesh, that every unclean imagination seemed blotted out from his soul, and never again was there the least consent to any carnal thought. His conversion was now

complete. Everyone noticed that he would speak of nothing but spiritual things, and his elder brother begged him not to take any rash or extreme resolution, which might compromise the honour of their family.

II. SPIRITUAL FORMATION (1522-24)

When Ignatius left Loyola he had no definite plans for the future, except that he wished to rival all the saints had done in the way of penance. His first care was to make a general confession at the famous sanctuary of Montserrat, where, after three days of self-examination, and carefully noting his sins, he confessed, gave to the poor the rich clothes in which he had come, and put on garment of sack-cloth reaching to his feet. His sword and dagger he suspended at Our Lady's altar, and passed the night watching before them. Next morning, the feast of the Annunciation, 1522, after Communion, he left the sanctuary, not knowing whither he went. But he soon fell in with a kind woman, Iñes Pascual, who showed him a cavern near the neighbouring town of Manresa, where he might retire for prayer, austerities, and contemplation, while he lived on alms. But here, instead of obtaining greater peace, he was consumed with the most troublesome scruples. Had he confessed this sin? Had he omitted that circumstance? At one time he was violently tempted to end his miseries by suicide, on which he resolved neither to eat nor to drink (unless his life was in danger), until God granted him the peace which he desired, and so he continued until his confessor stopped him at the end of the week. At last, however, he triumphed over all obstacles, and then abounded in wonderful graces and visions.

It was at this time, too, that he began to make notes of his spiritual experiences, notes which grew into the little book of "The Spiritual Exercises". God also afflicted him with severe sicknesses, when he was looked after by friends in the public hospital; for many felt drawn towards him, and he requited their many kind offices by teaching them how to pray and instructing them in spiritual matters. Having recovered health, and acquired sufficient experience to guide him in his new life, he commenced his long-meditated migration to the Holy Land. From the first he had looked forward to it as leading to a life of heroic penance; now he also regarded it as a school in which he might learn how to realize clearly and to conform himself perfectly to Christ's life. The voyage was fully as painful as he had conceived. Poverty, sickness, exposure, fatigue, starvation, dangers of shipwreck and capture, prisons, blows, contradictions, these were his daily lot; and on his arrival the Franciscans, who had charge of the holy places, commanded him to return under pain of sin. Ignatius demanded what right they had thus to interfere with a pilgrim like himself, and the friars explained that, to prevent many troubles which had occurred in finding ransoms for Christian prisoners, the pope had given them the power and they offered to show him their Bulls. Ignatius at once submitted, though it meant altering his whole plan of life, refused to look at the proffered Bulls, and was back at Barcelona about March, 1524.

III. STUDIES AND COMPANIONS (1521-39)

Ignatius left Jerusalem in the dark as to his future and "asking himself as he went, *quid agendum*" (Autobiography, 50). Eventually he resolved to study, in order to be of greater help to others. To studies he therefore gave eleven years, more than a third of his remaining life. Later he studied among school-boys at Barcelona, and early in 1526 he knew enough to proceed to his philosophy at the University of Alcalá. But here he met with many troubles to be described later, and at the end of 1527 he entered the University of Salamanca, whence, his trials continuing, he betook himself to Paris (June, 1528), and there with great method repeated his course of arts, taking his M.A. on 14 March, 1535. Meanwhile theology had been begun, and he had taken the licentiate in 1534; the doctorate he never took, as his health compelled him to leave Paris in March, 1535. Though Ignatius, despite his pains, acquired no great erudition, he gained many practical advantages from his course of education. To say nothing of knowledge sufficient to find such information as he needed afterwards to hold his own in the company of the learned, and to control others more erudite than himself, he also became thoroughly versed in the science of education, and learned by experience how the life of prayer and penance might be combined with that of teaching and study, an invaluable acquirement to the future founder of the Society of Jesus. The labours of Ignatius for others involved him in trials without number. At Barcelona, he was beaten senseless, and his companion killed, at the instigation of some worldlings vexed at being refused entrance into a convent which he had reformed. At Alcalá, a meddlesome inquisitor, Figueroa, harassed him constantly, and once automatically imprisoned him for two months. This drove him to Salamanca, where, worse still, he was thrown into the common prison, fettered by the foot to his companion Calisto, which indignity only drew from Ignatius the characteristic words, "There are not so many handcuffs and chains in Salamanca, but that I desire even more for the love of God."

In Paris his trials were very varied -- from poverty, plague, works of charity, and college discipline, on which account he was once sentenced to a public flogging by Dr. Govea, the rector of Collège Ste-Barbe, but on his explaining his conduct, the rector as publicly begged his pardon. There was but one delation to the inquisitors, and, on Ignatius requesting a prompt settlement, the Inquisitor Ori told him proceedings were therewith quashed.

We notice a certain progression in Ignatius' dealing with accusations against him. The first time he allowed them to cease without any pronouncement being given in his favour. The second time he demurred at Figueroa wanting to end in this fashion. The third time, after sentence had been passed, he appealed to the Archbishop of Toledo against some of its clauses. Finally he does not await sentence, but goes at once to the judge to urge an inquiry, and eventually he made it his practice to demand sentence, whenever reflection was cast upon his orthodoxy. (Records of Ignatius' legal proceedings at Azpeitia, in 1515; at Alcalá in 1526, 1527; at Venice, 1537; at Rome in 1538, will be found in "Scripta de S.

Ignatio", pp. 580-620.) Ignatius had now for the third time gathered companions around him. His first followers in Spain had persevered for a time, even amid the severe trials of imprisonment, but instead of following Ignatius to Paris, as they had agreed to do, they gave him up. In Paris too the first to follow did not persevere long, but of the third band not one deserted him. They were (St.) Peter Faber, a Genevan Savoyard; (St.) Francis Xavier, of Navarre; James Laynez, Alonso Salmerón, and Nicolás Bobadilla, Spaniards; Simón Rodríguez, a Portuguese. Three others joined soon after -- Claude Le Jay, a Genevan Savoyard; Jean Codure and Paschase Broët, French. Progress is to be noted in the way Ignatius trained his companions. The first were exercised in the same severe exterior mortifications, begging, fasting, going barefoot, etc., which the saint was himself practising. But though this discipline had prospered in a quiet country place like Manresa, it had attracted an objectionable amount of criticism at the University of Alcalá. At Paris dress and habits were adapted to the life in great towns; fasting, etc., was reduced; studies and spiritual exercises were multiplied, and alms funded.

The only bond between Ignatius' followers so far was devotion to himself, and his great ideal of leading in the Holy Land a life as like as possible to Christ's. On 15 August, 1534, they took the vows of poverty and chastity at Montmartre (probably near the modern Chapelle de St-Denys, Rue Antoinette), and a third vow to go to the Holy Land after two years, when their studies were finished. Six months later Ignatius was compelled by bad health to return to his native country, and on recovery made his way slowly to Bologna, where, unable through ill health to study, he devoted himself to active works of charity till his companions came from Paris to Venice (6 January, 1537) on the way to the Holy Land. Finding further progress barred by the war with the Turks, they now agreed to await for a year the opportunity of fulfilling their vow, after which they would put themselves at the pope's disposal. Faber and some others, going to Rome in Lent, got leave for all to be ordained. They were eventually made priests on St. John Baptist's day. But Ignatius took eighteen months to prepare for his first Mass.

IV. FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIETY

By the winter of 1537, the year of waiting being over, it was time to offer their services to the pope. The others being sent in pairs to neighboring university towns, Ignatius with Faber and Laynez started for Rome. At La Storta, a few miles before reaching the city, Ignatius had a noteworthy vision. He seemed to see the Eternal Father associating him with His Son, who spoke the words: *Ego vobis Romae propitius ero*. Many have thought this promise simply referred to the subsequent success of the order there. Ignatius' own interpretation was characteristic: "I do not know whether we shall be crucified in Rome; but Jesus will be propitious." Just before or just after this, Ignatius had suggested for the title of their brotherhood "The Company of Jesus". *Company* was taken in its military sense, and in those days a company was generally known by its captain's name. In the Latin Bull of foundation, however, they were called

"Societas Jesu". We first hear of the term *Jesuit* in 1544, applied as a term of reproach by adversaries. It had been used in the fifteenth century to describe in scorn someone who cantingly interlarded his speech with repetitions of the Holy Name. In 1522 it was still regarded as a mark of scorn, but before very long the friends of the society saw that they could take it in a good sense, and, though never used by Ignatius, it was readily adopted (Pollen, "The Month", June, 1909). Paul III having received the fathers favourably, all were summoned to Rome to work under the pope's eyes. At this critical moment an active campaign of slander was opened by one Fra Matteo Mainardi (who eventually died in open heresy), and a certain Michael who had been refused admission to the order. It was not till 18 November, 1538, that Ignatius obtained from the governor of Rome an honourable sentence, still extant, in his favour. The thoughts of the fathers were naturally occupied with a formula of their intended mode of life to submit to the pope; and in March, 1539, they began to meet in the evenings to settle the matter.

Hitherto without superior, rule or tradition, they had prospered most remarkably. Why not continue as they had begun? The obvious answer was that without some sort of union, some houses for training postulants, they were practically doomed to die out with the existing members, for the pope already desired to send them about as missionaries from place to place. This point was soon agreed to, but when the question arose whether they should, by adding a vow of obedience to their existing vows, form themselves into a compact religious order, or remain, as they were, a congregation of secular priests, opinions differed much and seriously. Not only had they done so well without strict rules, but (to mention only one obstacle, which was in fact not overcome afterwards without great difficulty), there was the danger, if they decided for an order, that the pope might force them to adopt some ancient rule, which would mean the end of all their new ideas. The debate on this point continued for several weeks, but the conclusion in favour of a life under obedience was eventually reached unanimously. After this, progress was faster, and by 24 June some sixteen resolutions had been decided on, covering the main points of the proposed institute. Thence Ignatius drew up in five sections the first "Formula Instituti", which was submitted to the pope, who gave a viva voce approbation 3 September, 1539, but Cardinal Guidiccioni, the head of the commission appointed to report on the "Formula", was of the view that a new order should not be admitted, and with that the chances of approbation seemed to be at an end. Ignatius and his companions, undismayed, agreed to offer up 4000 Masses to obtain the object desired, and after some time the cardinal unexpectedly changed his mind, approved the "Formula" and the Bull "Regimini militantis Ecclesiae" (27 September, 1540), which embodies and sanctions it, was issued, but the members were not to exceed sixty (this clause was abrogated after two years). In April, 1541, Ignatius was, in spite of his reluctance, elected the first general, and on 22 April he and his companions made their profession in St. Paul Outside the Walls. The society was now fully constituted.

V. THE BOOK OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

This work originated in Ignatius' experiences, while he was at Loyola in 1521, and the chief meditations were probably reduced to their present shapes during his life at Manresa in 1522, at the end of which period he had begun to teach them to others. In the process of 1527 at Salamanca, they are spoken of for the first time as the "Book of Exercises". The earliest extant text is of the year 1541. At the request of St. Francis Borgia. The book was examined by papal censors and a solemn approbation given by Paul III in the Brief "Pastoralis Officii" of 1548. "The Spiritual Exercises" are written very concisely, in the form of a handbook for the priest who is to explain them, and it is practically impossible to describe them without making them, just as it might be impossible to explain Nelson's "Sailing Orders" to a man who knew nothing of ships or the sea. The idea of the work is to help the exercitant to find out what the will of God is in regard to his future, and to give him energy and courage to follow that will. The exercitant (under ideal circumstances) is guided through four weeks of meditations: the first week on sin and its consequences, the second on Christ's life on earth, the third on his passion, the fourth on His risen life; and a certain number of instructions (called "rules", "additions", "notes") are added to teach him how to pray, how to avoid scruples, how to elect a vocation in life without being swayed by the love of self or of the world. In their fullness they should, according to Ignatius' idea, ordinarily be made once or twice only; but in part (from three to four days) they may be most profitably made annually, and are now commonly called "retreats", from the seclusion or retreat from the world in which the exercitant lives. More popular selections are preached to the people in church and are called "missions". The stores of spiritual wisdom contained in the "Book of Exercises" are truly astonishing, and their author is believed to have been inspired while drawing them up. (See also next section.) Sommervogel enumerates 292 writers among the Jesuits alone, who have commented on the whole book, to say nothing of commentators on parts (e.g. the meditations), who are far more numerous still. But the best testimony to the work is the frequency with which the exercises are made. In England (for which alone statistics are before the writer) the educated people who make retreats number annually about 22,000, while the number who attend popular expositions of the Exercises in "missions" is approximately 27,000, out of a total Catholic population of 2,000,000.

VI. THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE SOCIETY

Ignatius was commissioned in 1541 to draw them up, but he did not begin to do so until 1547, having occupied the mean space with introducing customs tentatively, which were destined in time to become laws. In 1547 Father Polanco became his secretary, and with his intelligent aid the first draft of the constitutions was made between 1547 and 1550, and simultaneously pontifical approbation was asked for a new edition of the "Formula". Julius III conceded this by the Bull "Exposcit debitum", 21 July, 1550. At the same time a large number of the older

fathers assembled to peruse the first draft of the constitutions, and though none of them made any serious objections, Ignatius' next recension (1552) shows a fair amount of changes. This revised version was then published and put into force throughout the society, a few explanations being added here and there to meet difficulties as they arose. These final touches were being added by the saint up till the time of his death, after which the first general congregation of the society ordered them to be printed, and they have never been touched since. The true way of appreciating the constitutions of the society is to study them as they are carried into practice by the Jesuits themselves, and for this, reference may be made to the articles on the SOCIETY OF JESUS. A few points, however, in which Ignatius' institute differed from the older orders may be mentioned here. They are:

1. the vow not to accept ecclesiastical dignities;
2. increased probations. The novitiate is prolonged from one year to two, with a third year, which usually falls after the priesthood. Candidates are moreover at first admitted to simple vows only, solemn vows coming much later on;
3. the Society does not keep choir;
4. it does not have a distinctive religious habit;
5. it does not accept the direction of convents;
6. it is not governed by a regular triennial chapter;
7. it is also said to have been the first order to undertake *officially and by virtue of its constitutions* active works such as the following:
 - foreign missions, at the pope's bidding;
 - the education of youth of all classes;
 - the instruction of the ignorant and the poor;
 - ministering to the sick, to prisoners, etc.

The above points give no conception of the originality with which Ignatius has handled all parts of his subject, even those common to all orders. It is obvious that he must have acquired some knowledge of other religious constitutions, especially during the years of inquiry (1541-1547), when he was on terms of intimacy with religious of every class. But witnesses, who attended him, tell us that he wrote without any books before him except the Missal. Though his constitutions of course embody technical terms to be found in other rules, and also a few stock phrases like "the old man's staff", and "the corpse carried to any place", the thought is entirely original, and would seem to have been God-guided throughout. By a happy accident we still possess his journal of prayers for forty days, during which he was deliberating the single point of poverty in churches. It shows that in making up his mind he was marvelously aided by heavenly lights, intelligence, and visions. If, as we may surely infer, the whole work was equally assisted by grace, its heavenly inspiration will not be doubtful. The same conclusion is probable true of "The Spiritual Exercises".

VII. LATER LIFE AND DEATH

The later years of Ignatius were spent in partial retirement, the correspondence inevitable in governing the Society leaving no time for those works of active ministry which in themselves he much preferred. His health too began to fail. In 1551, when he had gathered the elder fathers to revise the constitutions, he laid his resignation of the generalate in their hands, but they refused to accept it then or later, when the saint renewed his prayer. In 1554 Father Nadal was given the powers of vicar-general, but it was often necessary to send him abroad as commissary, and in the end Ignatius continued, with Polanco's aid, to direct everything. With most of his first companions he had to part soon. Rodríguez started on 5 March, 1540, for Lisbon, where he eventually founded the Portuguese province, of which he was made provincial on 10 October, 1546. St. Francis Xavier followed Rodríguez immediately, and became provincial of India in 1549. In September, 1541, Salmeron and Broet started for their perilous mission to Ireland, which they reached (via Scotland) next Lent. But Ireland, the prey to Henry VIII's barbarous violence, could not give the zealous missionaries a free field for the exercise of the ministries proper to their institute. All Lent they passed in Ulster, flying from persecutors, and doing in secret such good as they might. With difficulty they reached Scotland, and regained Rome, Dec., 1542. The beginnings of the Society in Germany are connected with St. Peter Faber, Blessed Peter Canisius, Le Jay, and Bobadilla in 1542. In 1546 Laynez and Salmeron were nominated papal theologians for the Council of Trent, where Canisius, Le Jay, and Covillon also found places. In 1553 came the picturesque, but not very successful mission of Nuñez Barretto as Patriarch of Abyssinia. For all these missions Ignatius wrote minute instructions, many of which are still extant. He encouraged and exhorted his envoys in their work by his letters, while the reports they wrote back to him form our chief source of information on the missionary triumphs achieved. Though living alone in Rome, it was he who in effect led, directed, and animated his subjects all the world over.

The two most painful crosses of this period were probably the suits with Isabel Roser and Simón Rodríguez. The former lady had been one of Ignatius' first and most esteemed patronesses during his beginnings in Spain. She came to Rome later on and persuaded Ignatius to receive a vow of obedience to him, and she was afterwards joined by two or three other ladies. But the saint found that the demands they made on his time were more than he could possibly allow them. "They caused me more trouble", he is reported to have said, "than the whole of the Society", and he obtained from the pope a relaxation of the vow he had accepted. A suit with Roser followed, which she lost, and Ignatius forbade his sons hereafter to become *ex officio* directors to convents of nuns (Scripta de S. Ignatio, pp. 652-5). Painful though this must have been to a man so loyal as Ignatius, the difference with Rodríguez, one of his first companions, must have been more bitter still. Rodríguez had founded the Province of Portugal, and brought it in a short time to a high state of efficiency. But his methods were not precisely those of Ignatius, and, when new men of Ignatius' own training came

under him, differences soon made themselves felt. A struggle ensued in which Rodríguez unfortunately took sides against Ignatius' envoys. The results for the newly formed province were disastrous. Well-nigh half of its members had to be expelled before peace was established; but Ignatius did not hesitate. Rodríguez having been recalled to Rome, the new provincial being empowered to dismiss him if he refused, he demanded a formal trial, which Ignatius, foreseeing the results, endeavoured to ward off. But on Simón's insistence a full court of inquiry was granted, whose proceedings are now printed and it unanimously condemned Rodríguez to penance and banishment from the province (*Scripta etc.*, pp. 666-707). Of all his external works, those nearest his heart, to judge by his correspondence, were the building and foundation of the Roman College (1551), and of the German College (1552). For their sake he begged, worked, and borrowed with splendid insistence until his death. The success of the first was ensured by the generosity of St. Francis Borgia, before he entered the Society. The latter was still in a struggling condition when Ignatius died, but his great ideas have proved the true and best foundation of both.

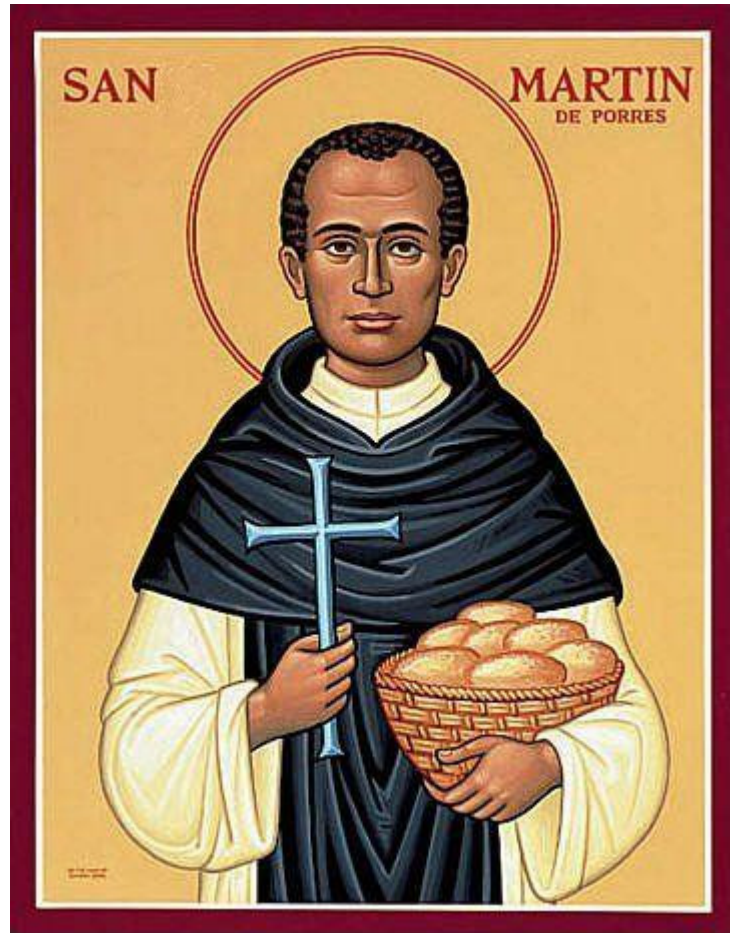
In the summer of 1556 the saint was attacked by Roman fever. His doctors did not foresee any serious consequences, but the saint did. On 30 July, 1556, he asked for the last sacraments and the papal blessing, but he was told that no immediate danger threatened. Next morning at daybreak, the infirmarian found him lying in peaceful prayer, so peaceful that he did not at once perceive that the saint was actually dying. When his condition was realized, the last blessing was given, but the end came before the holy oils could be fetched. Perhaps he had prayed that his death, like his life, might pass without any demonstration. He was beatified by Paul V on 27 July, 1609, and canonized by Gregory XV on 22 May, 1622. His body lies under the altar designed by Pozzi in the Gesù. Though he died in the sixteenth year from the foundation of the Society, that body already numbered about 1000 religious (of whom, however, only 35 were yet professed) with 100 religious houses, arranged in 10 provinces. (Sacchini, *op. cit. infra.*, lib.1, cc,i, nn. 1-20.) For his place in history see COUNTER-REFORMATION. It is impossible to sketch in brief Ignatius' grand and complex character: ardent yet restrained, fearless, resolute, simple, prudent, strong, and loving. The Protestant and Jansenistic conception of him as a restless, bustling pragmatist bears no correspondence at all with the peacefulness and perseverance which characterized the real man. That he was a strong disciplinarian is true. In a young and rapidly growing body that was inevitable; and the age loved strong virtues. But if he believed in discipline as an educative force, he despised any other motives for action except the love of God and man. It was by studying Ignatius as a ruler that Xavier learnt the principle, "the company of Jesus ought to be called the company of love and conformity of souls". (*Ep.*, 12 Jan., 1519).

Offering and Prayer of St. Ignatius Loyola –

"Suscipe"

Take, O Lord, and receive my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding and my whole will. All that I am and all that I possess You have given me: I surrender it all to You to be disposed of according to Your will. Give me only Your love and Your grace; with these I will be rich enough, and will desire nothing more.

Icon of Saint Martin de Porres



St. Martin de Porres was born at Lima, Peru, in 1579. His father was a Spanish gentleman and his mother a freed-woman from Panama. At fifteen, he became a lay brother at the Dominican Friary at Lima and spent his whole life there-as a barber, farm laborer, almoner, and infirmarian, among other things.

Martin had a great desire to go off to some foreign mission and thus earn the palm of martyrdom. However, since this was not possible, he made a martyr out of his body, devoting himself to ceaseless and severe penances. In turn, God endowed him with many graces and wondrous gifts, such as, aerial flights and bilocation.

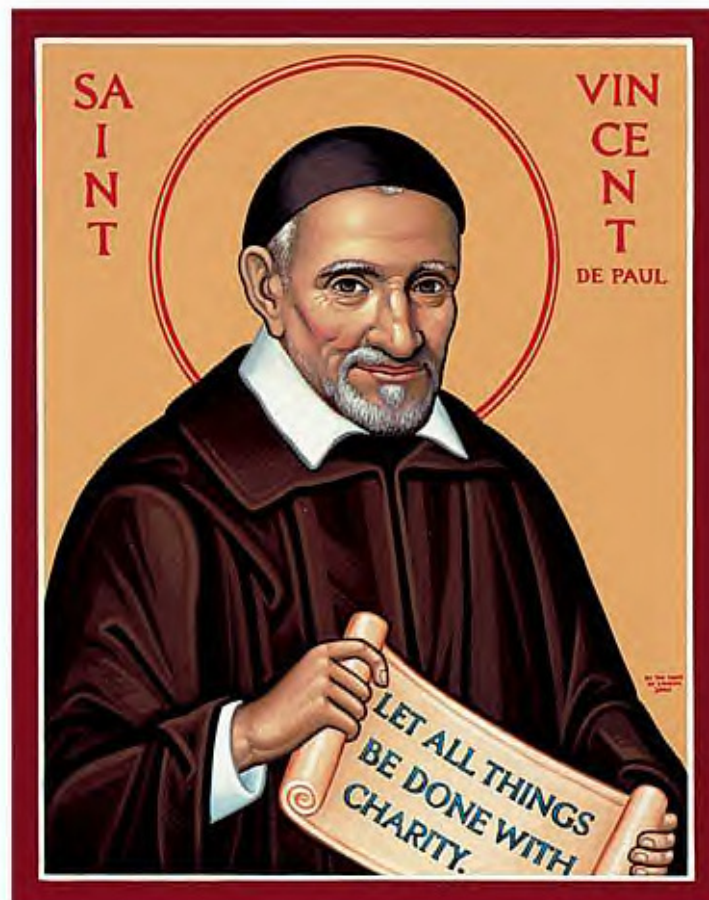
St. Martin's love was all-embracing, shown equally to humans and to animals, including vermin, and he maintained a cats and dogs hospital at his sister's house. He also possessed spiritual wisdom, demonstrated in his solving his sister's marriage problems, raising a dowry for his niece inside of three day's time, and resolving theological problems for the learned of his Order and for bishops. A close friend of St. Rose of Lima, this saintly man died on November 3, 1639 and was canonized on May 6, 1962. His feast day is November 3.

Prayer for Healing to Saint Martin de Porres

O Loving Lord, Saint Martin studied medicine to cure the sufferings of people. By entering the Dominican order and growing in holiness, he discovered that You often would heal people miraculously through his prayers. I ask him to intercede for me to be Your instrument of healing to those around me who have illnesses. Lord Jesus, teach me to be a healer through my words and acts of compassion, give me wisdom for the proper use of modern science, and increase the power of my prayers. I also ask Saint Martin to pray for the healing of these people according to Your loving will and divine grace. Saint Martin, pray for us. Amen.

Saint of: barbers, innkeepers, public education, public health, racial harmony, social justice.

Icon of Saint Vincent de Paul



Born at Pouy, Gascony, France, in 1580, though some authorities have said 1576; died at Paris, 27 September, 1660. Born of a peasant family, he made his humanities studies at Dax with the Cordeliers, and his theological studies, interrupted by a short stay at Saragossa, were made at Toulouse where he graduated in theology. Ordained in 1600 he remained at Toulouse or in its vicinity acting as tutor while continuing his own studies. Brought to Marseilles for an inheritance, he was returning by sea in 1605 when Turkish pirates captured him and took him to Tunis. He was sold as a slave, but escaped in 1607 with his master, a renegade whom he converted. On returning to France he went to Avignon to the papal vice-legate, whom he followed to Rome to continue his studies. He was sent back to France in 1609, on a secret mission to Henry IV; he became almoner to the Queen Marguerite of Valois, and was provided with the little Abbey of Saint-Léonard-de-Chaume. At the request of M. de Berulle, founder of the Oratory, he took charge of the parish of Clichy near Paris, but several months later (1612) he entered the services of the Gondi, an illustrious French family, to educate the children of Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi. He became the spiritual director of Mme de Gondi. With her assistance he began giving missions on her estates; but to escape the esteem of which he was the object he left the Gondi and with the approval of M. de Berulle had himself

appointed curé of Chatillon-les-Dombes (Bresse), where he converted several Protestants and founded the first conference of charity for the assistance of the poor. He was recalled by the Gondi and returned to them (1617) five months later, resuming the peasant missions. Several learned Paris priests, won by his example, joined him. Nearly everywhere after each of these missions, a conference of charity was founded for the relief of the poor, notably at Joigny, Châlons, Mâcon, Trévoux, where they lasted until the Revolution.

After the poor of the country, Vincent's solicitude was directed towards the convicts in the galleys, who were subject to M. de Gondi as general of the galleys of France. Before being convoyed aboard the galleys or when illness compelled them to disembark, the condemned convicts were crowded with chains on their legs onto damp dungeons, their only food being black bread and water, while they were covered with vermin and ulcers. Their moral state was still more frightful than their physical misery. Vincent wished to ameliorate both. Assisted by a priest, he began visiting the galley convicts of Paris, speaking kind words to them, doing them every manner of service however repulsive. He thus won their hearts, converted many of them, and interested in their behalf several persons who came to visit them. A house was purchased where Vincent established a hospital. Soon appointed by Louis XIII royal almoner of the galleys, Vincent profited by this title to visit the galleys of Marseilles where the convicts were as unfortunate as at Paris; he lavished his care on them and also planned to build them a hospital; but this he could only do ten years later. Meanwhile, he gave on the galley of Bordeaux, as on those of Marseilles, a mission which was crowned with success (1625).

Congregation of the Mission

The good wrought everywhere by these missions together with the urging of Mme de Gondi decided Vincent to found his religious institute of priests vowed to the evangelization of country people--the Congregation of Priests of the Mission (q.v.).

Experience had quickly revealed to St. Vincent that the good done by the missions in country places could not last unless there were priests to maintain it and these were lacking at that time in France. Since the Council of Trent the bishops had been endeavoring to found seminaries to form them, but these seminaries encountered many obstacles, the chief of which were the wars of religion. Of twenty founded not ten had survived till 1625. The general assembly of the French clergy expressed the wish that candidates for Holy Orders should only be admitted after some days of recollection and retreat. At the request of the Bishop of Beauvais, Potierdes Gesvres, Vincent undertook to attempt at Beauvais (September, 1628) the first of these retreats. According to his plan they comprised ascetic conferences and instructions on the knowledge of things most indispensable to priests. Their chief service was that they gave rise to the seminaries as these prevailed later in France. At first they lasted only ten days,

but in extending them by degrees to fifteen or twenty days, then to one, two, or three months before each order, the bishops eventually prolonged the stay of their clerics to two or three years between philosophy and the priesthood and there were what were called *seminaries d'ordinands* and later *grands seminaries*, when lesser ones were founded. No one did more than Vincent towards this double creation. As early as 1635 he had established a seminary at the Collège des Bons-Enfants. Assisted by Richelieu, who gave him 1000 crowns, he kept at Bons-Enfants only ecclesiastics studying theology (*grand seminarie*) and he founded besides Saint-Lazare for young clerics studying the humanities a lesser seminary called the Seminary of St. Charles (1642). He had sent some of his priests to the Bishop of Annecy (1641) to direct his seminary, and assisted the bishops to establish others in their dioceses by furnishing priests to direct them. At his death he had thus accepted the direction of eleven seminaries. Prior to the Revolution his congregation was directing in France fifty-three upper and nine lesser seminaries, that is a third of all in France.

The ecclesiastical conference completed the work of the seminaries. Since 1633 St. Vincent held one every Tuesday at Saint-Lazare at which assembled all the priests desirous of conferring in common concerning the virtues and the functions of their state. Among others Bossuet and Tronson took part. With the conferences, St. Vincent instituted at St-Lazare open retreats for laymen as well as priests. It is estimated that in the last twenty-five years of St. Vincent's life there came regularly more than 800 persons yearly, or more than 20,000 in all. these retreats contributed powerfully to infuse a Christian spirit among the masses, but they imposed heavy sacrifices on the house of St-Lazare. Nothing was demanded of the retreatants; when there was question of the good of souls Vincent thought little of expense. At the complaints of his brethren who desired that the admission of the retreatants should be made more difficult he consented one day to keep the door. Towards evening there had never been so many accepted and when the embarrassed brother came to inform him that there was no more room he merely replied "well, give mine".

Work for the Poor

Vincent de Paul had established the Daughters of Charity almost at the same time as the *exercices des ordinands*. At first they were intended to assist the conferences of charity. When these conferences were established at Paris (1629) the ladies who joined them readily brought their alms and were willing to visit the poor, but it often happened that they did not know how to give them care which their conditions demanded and they sent their servants to do what was needful in their stead. Vincent conceived the idea of enlisting good young women for this service of the poor. They were first distributed singly in the various parishes where the conferences were established and they visited the poor with these ladies of the conferences or when necessary cared for them during their absence. In recruiting, forming, and directing these servants of the poor, Vincent found able assistance in Mlle Legras. When their number increased he grouped

then into a community under her direction, coming himself every week to hold a conference suitable to their condition. (For further details see Sisters of Charity.) Besides the Daughters of Charity Vincent de Paul secured for the poor the services of the Ladies of Charity, at the request of the Archbishop of Paris. He grouped (1634) under this name some pious women who were determined to nurse the sick poor entering the Hotel-Dieu to the number of 20,000 or 25,000 annually; they also visited the prisons. Among them were as many as 200 ladies of the highest rank. After having drawn up their rule St. Vincent upheld and stimulated their charitable zeal. It was due to them that he was able to collect the enormous sums which he distributed in aid of all the unfortunates. Among the works, which their co-operation enabled him to undertake, that of the care of foundlings was one of the most important. Some of the foundlings at this period were deliberately deformed by miscreants anxious to exploit public pity. Others were received into a municipal asylum called "la couche", but often they were ill-treated or allowed to die of hunger. The Ladies of Charity began by purchasing twelve children drawn by lot. who were installed in a special house confided to the Daughters of Charity and four nurses. Thus years later the number of children reached 4000; their support cost 30,000 *livres*; soon with the increase in the number of children this reached 40,000 *livres*.

With the assistance of a generous unknown who placed at his disposal the sum of 10,000 *livres*, Vincent founded the Hospice of the Name of Jesus, where forty old people of both sexes found a shelter and work suited to their condition. This is the present hospital of the incurables. The same beneficence was extended to all the poor of Paris but the creation of the general hospital which was first thought of by several Ladies of Charity, such as the Duchesse d'Aiguillon. Vincent adopted the idea and did more than anyone for the realization of what has been called one of the greatest works of charity of the seventeenth century, the sheltering of 40,000 poor in an asylum where they would be given a useful work. In answer St. Vincent's appeal the gifts poured in. The king granted the lands of the Salpêtrière for the erection of the hospital, with a capital of 50,000 *livres* and an endowment of 3000; Cardinal Mazarin sent 100,000 *livres* as first gift, Président de Lamoignon 20,000 crowns, a lady of the Bullion family 60,000 *livres*. St. Vincent attached the Daughters of Charity to the work and supported it with all his strength.

St. Vincent's charity was not restricted to Paris, but reached to all the provinces desolated by misery. In that period of the Thirty Years War known as the French period Lorraine, Trois-Evêchés, Franche-Comté, and Champagne underwent for nearly a quarter of a century all the horrors and scourges which then more than ever war drew in its train. Vincent made urgent appeals to the Ladies of Charity; it has been estimated that at his reiterated requests he secured 12,000 *livres* equivalent to \$60,000 in our time (1913). When the treasury was empty he again sought alms which he dispatched at once to the stricken districts. When contributions began to fail Vincent decided to print and sell the accounts sent him from those desolated districts; this met with great success, even developing a

periodical newspaper called "Le magasin charitable". Vincent took advantage of it to fund in the ruined provinces the work of the *potages économiques*, the tradition of which still subsists in our modern economic kitchens. He himself compiled with minute care instructions concerning the manner of preparing these *potages* and the quantity of fat, butter, vegetables, and bread which should be used. He encouraged the foundation of societies undertaking to bury the dead and to clean away the dirt which was a permanent cause of plague. They were often headed by the missionaries and the Sisters of Charity. Through them also Vincent distributed to their land. At the same time, in order to remove them from the brutality of the soldiers, he brought to Paris 200 young women whom he endeavored to shelter in various convents. and numerous children whom he received at St-Lazare. He even founded a special organization for the relief of the nobility of Lorraine who had sought refuge in Paris. After the general peace he directed his solicitude and his alms to the Irish and English Catholics who had been driven from their country.

All these benefits had rendered the name of Vincent de Paul popular in Paris and even at the Court. Richelieu sometimes received him and listened favorably to his requests; he assisted him in his first seminary foundations and established a house for his missionaries in the village of Richelieu. On his deathbed Louis XIII desired to be assisted by him: "Oh, Monsieur Vincent", said he, "if I am restored to health I shall appoint no bishops unless they have spent three years with you." His widow, Ann of Austria, made Vincent a member of the council of conscience charged with nominations to benefices. These honors did not alter Vincent's modesty and simplicity. He went to the Court only through necessity, in fitting but simple garb. He made no use of his influence save for the welfare of the poor and in the interest of the Church. Under Mazarin, when Paris rose at the time of the Fronde (1649) against the Regent, Anne of Austria, who was compelled to withdraw to St-Fermain-en-Laye, Vincent braved all dangers to go and implore her clemency in behalf of the people of Paris and boldly advised her to sacrifice at least for a time the cardinal minister in order to avoid the evils which the war threatened to bring on the people. He also remonstrated with Mazarin himself. His advice was not listened to. St. Vincent only redoubled his efforts to lessen the evils of the war in Paris. Through his care soup was distributed daily to 15,000 or 16,000 refugees or worthy and poor; 800 to 900 young women were sheltered; in the single parish of St. Paul the Sisters of Charity made and distributed soup every day to 500 poor, besides which they had to care for 60 to 80 sick. During this time Vincent, indifferent to dangers which he ran, multiplied letters and visits to the Court at St-Denis to win minds to peace and clemency; he even wrote a letter to the pope asking him to intervene and to interpose his mediation to hasten peace between the two parties.

Jansenism also made evident his attachment to the Faith and the use to which he put his influences in its defense. When Duvergier de Hauranne, later celebrated as the Abbé de St-Cyran, came to Paris (about 1621), Vincent de Paul showed some interest in him as in a fellow countryman and a priest in

whom he discerned learning and piety. But when he became better acquainted with the basis of his ideas concerning grace, far from being misled by them, he endeavored to arrest him in the path of error. When the "Augustinus" of Jansenius and "Frequent Communion" of Arnauld revealed the true ideas and opinions of the sect, Vincent set about combating; he persuaded the Bishop of Lavaur, Abra de Raconis, to write against them. In the Council of Conscience he opposed the admission to benefices of anyone who shared them, and joined the chancellor and the nuncio in seeking means to stay their progress. Stimulated by him some bishops at St-Lazare took the initiative in relating these errors to the pope. St. Vincent induced 85 bishops to request the condemnation of the five famous propositions, and persuaded Anne of Austria to write to the pope to hasten his decision. When the five propositions had been condemned by Innocent X (1655) and Alexander VII (1656), Vincent sought to have this sentence accepted by all. His zeal for the Faith, however, did not suffer him to forget his charity; he gave evidence in behalf of St-Cyran, whom Richelieu had imprisoned (1638), and is said to have assisted at his funeral. When Innocent X had announced his decision he went to the solitaries of Port-Royal to congratulate them on the intention they had previously manifested of submitting fully; he even begged preachers renowned for their anti-Jansenist zeal to avoid in their sermons all that might embitter their adversaries. The religious orders also benefited by the great influence of Vincent. Not only did he long act as director to the Sisters of the Visitation, founded by Francis de Sales, but he received at Paris the Religious of the Blessed Sacrament, supported the existence of the Daughters of the Cross (whose object was to teach girls in the country), and encouraged the reform of the Benedictines, Cistercians, Antonines, Augustinians, Premonstratensians, and the Congregation of Grandmont; and Cardinal de Rochefoucault, who was entrusted with the reform of the religious orders in France, called Vincent his right hand and obliged him to remain in the Council of Conscience.

Vincent's zeal and charity went beyond the boundaries of France. As early as 1638 he commissioned his priests to preach to the shepherds of the Roman Campagna; he had them give at Rome and Genoa the *exercices des ordinands* and preach missions on Savoy and Piedmont. He sent others to Ireland, Scotland, the Hebrides, Poland, and Madagascar (1648-60). Of all the works carried on abroad none perhaps interested him so much as the poor slaves of Barbary, whose lot he had once shared. These were from 25,000 to 30,000 of these unfortunates divided chiefly between Tunis, Algiers, and Bizaerta. Christians for the most part, they had been carried off from their families by the Turkish corsairs. They were treated as veritable beasts of burden, condemned to frightful labour, without any corporal or spiritual care. Vincent left nothing undone to send them aid as early as 1645 he sent among them a priest and a brother, who were followed by others. Vincent even had one of these invested with the dignity of consul in order that he might work more efficaciously for the slaves. They gave frequent missions to them, and assured them the services of religion. At the same time they acted as agents with their families, and were able to free

some of them. Up to the time of St. Vincent's death these missionaries had ransomed 1200 slaves, and they had expended 1,200,000 *liveres* in behalf of the slaves of Barbary, not to mention the affronts and persecutions of all kinds which they themselves had endured from the Turks. This exterior life so fruitful in works had its source in a profound spirit of religion and in an interior life of wonderful intensity. He was singularly faithful to the duties of his state, careful to obey the suggestions of faith and piety, devoted to prayer, meditation, and all religious and ascetic exercises. Of practical and prudent mind, he left nothing to chance; his distrust of himself was equalled only by his trust in Providence; when he founded the Congregation of the Mission and the Sisters of Charity he refrained from giving them fixed constitutions beforehand; it was only after tentatives, trials, and long experience that he resolved in the last years of his life to give them definitive rules. His zeal for souls knew no limit; all occasions were to him opportunities to exercise it. When he died the poor of Paris lost their best friend and humanity a benefactor unsurpassed in modern times.

Forty years later (1705) the Superior-General of the Lazarists requested that the process of his canonization might be instituted. Many bishops, among them Bossuet, Fénelon, Fléchier, and Cardinal de Noailles, supported the request. On 13 August, 1729, Vincent was declared Blessed by Benedict XIII, and canonized by Clement XII on 16 June, 1737. In 1885 Leo XIII gave him as patron to the sisters of Charity. In the course of his long and busy life Vincent de Paul wrote a large number of letters, estimated at not less than 30,000. After his death the task of collecting them was begun; in the eighteenth century nearly 7000 had been gathered; many have since been lost. Those which remained were published rather incorrectly as "Lettres et conférences de s. Vincent de Paul" (supplement, Paris, 1888); "Lettres inédites de saint Vincent de Paul" (Coste in "Revue de Gascogne", 1909, 1911); "Lettres choisies de saint Vincent de Paul" (Paris, 1911); the total of letters thus published amounts to about 3200. There have also been collected and published the saint's "Conférences aux missionnaires" (Paris, 1882) and "Conférences aux Filles de la Charité" (Paris, 1882).

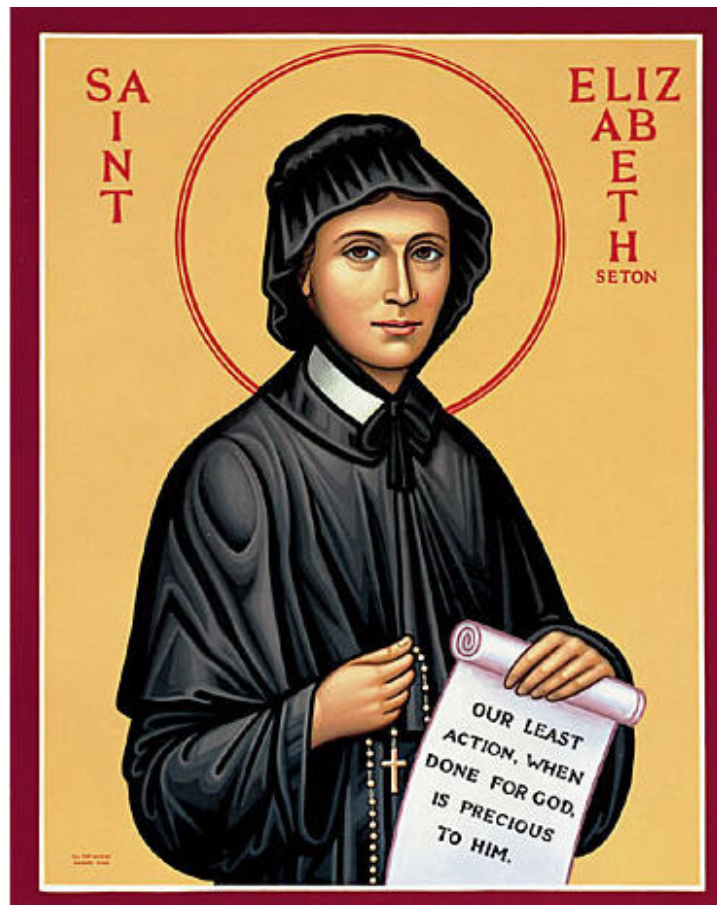
Prayer to Saint Vincent de Paul for the Saint Vincent de Paul Societies,

Generous God, Saint Vincent developed a special concern for the poor after giving the Sacraments to a dying peasant. He cared for slaves, prostitutes, war victims, and the destitute. I ask him to pray for all the Saint Vincent de Paul Societies, the churches that sponsor them, all other charitable ministries, and the people they help. O Lord, multiply the provisions they distribute to the needy, give new

strength to the workers, and bring in more volunteers who serve the poor with genuine love. Protect these ministries and teach us all by their example that helping the needy brings great joy. Saint Vincent, pray for us. Amen.

Saint of: leprosy, hospital workers, charitable societies, horses, hospitals.

Icon of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton



The first "All-American saint," Saint Elizabeth Seton was Foundress of the Sisters of Charity and the originator of parochial schools. She is depicted holding the rosary, which she avidly prayed, and a scroll on which is written one of her favorite spiritual maxims.

Foundress and first superior of the “**Sisters of Charity**” in the United States, b. in New York City, 28 Aug., 1774, of non-Catholic parents of high position; d. at Emmitsburg, Maryland, 4 Jan., 1821.

Her father, Dr. Richard Bayley (b. Connecticut and educated in England), was the first professor of anatomy at Columbia College and eminent for his work as health officer of the Port of New York. Her mother, Catherine Charlton, daughter of an Anglican minister of Staten Island, N.Y., died when Elizabeth was three years old, leaving two other young daughters. The father married again, and among the children of this second marriage was Guy Charleton Bayley, whose convert son, James Roosevelt Bayley, became Archbishop of Baltimore. Elizabeth always showed great affection for her stepmother, who was a devout Anglican, and for her stepbrothers and sisters. Her education was chiefly conducted by her father, a brilliant man of great natural virtue, who trained her to self-restraint as well as in intellectual pursuits. She read industriously, her notebooks indicating a special interest in religious and historical subjects. She was very religious, wore a small crucifix around her neck, and took great delight in reading the Scriptures, especially the Psalms, a practice she retained until her death.

She was married on 25 Jan., 1794, in St. Paul's Church, New York, to William Magee Seton, of that city, by Bishop Prevoost. In her sister-in-law, Rebecca Seton, she found the "friend of her soul", and as they went about on missions of mercy they were called the "Protestant Sisters of Charity". Business troubles culminated on the death of her father-in-law in 1798. Elizabeth and her husband presided over the large orphaned family; she shared his financial anxieties, aiding him with her sound judgment. Dr. Bayley's death in 1801 was a great trial to his favourite child. In her anxiety for his salvation she had offered to God, during his fatal illness, the life of his infant daughter Catherine. Catherine's life was spared, however, she died at the age of ninety, as Mother Catherine of the Sisters of Mercy, New York. In 1803 Mr. Seton's health required a sea voyage; he started with his wife and eldest daughter for Leghorn, where the Filicchi brothers, business friends of the Seton firm, resided. The other children, William, Richard, Rebecca, and Catherine, were left to the care of Rebecca Seton.

From a journal which Mrs. Seton kept during her travels we learn of her heroic effort to sustain the drooping spirits of her husband during the voyage, followed by a long detention in quarantine, and until his death at Pisa (27 Dec., 1803). She and her daughter remained for some time with the Filicchi families. While with these Catholic families and in the churches of Italy Mrs. Seton first began to see the beauty of the Catholic Faith. Delayed by her daughter's illness and then by her own, she sailed for home accompanied by Antonio Filicchi, and reached New York on 3 June, 1804. Her sister-in-law, Rebecca, died in July. A time of great spiritual perplexity began for Mrs. Seton, whose prayer was, "If I am right Thy grace impart still in the right to say. If I am wrong Oh, teach my heart to find the better way." Mr. Hobart (afterwards an Anglican bishop), who had great

influence over her, used every effort to dissuade her from joining the Catholic Church, while Mr. Filicchi presented the claims of the true religion and arranged a correspondence between Elizabeth and Bishop Cheverus. Through Mr. Filicchi she also wrote to Bishop Carroll. Elizabeth meanwhile added fasting to her prayers for light. The result was that on Ash Wednesday, 14 March, 1805, she was received into the Church by Father Matthew O'Brien in St. Peter's Church, Barclay St., New York. On 25 March she made her first Communion with extraordinary fervour; even the faint shadow of this sacrament in the Protestant Church had had such an attraction for her that she used to hasten from one church to another to receive it twice each Sunday. She well understood the storm that her conversion would raise among her Protestant relatives and friends at the time she most needed their help. Little of her husband's fortune was left, but numerous relatives would have provided amply for her and her children had not this barrier been raised. She joined an English Catholic gentleman named White, who, with his wife, was opening a school for boys in the suburbs of New York, but the widely circulated report that this was a proselytizing scheme forced the school to close.

A few faithful friends arranged for Mrs. Seton to open a boarding-house for some of the boys of a Protestant school taught by the curate of St. Mark's. In January, 1806, Cecilia Seton, Elizabeth's young sister-in-law, became very ill and begged to see the ostracized convert; Mrs. Seton was sent for, and became a constant visitor. Cecilia told her that she desired to become a Catholic. When Cecilia's decision was known threats were made to have Mrs. Seton expelled from the state by the Legislature. On her recovery Cecilia fled to Elizabeth for refuge and was received into the Church. She returned to her brother's family on his wife's death. Mrs. Seton's boarding-house for boys had to be given up. Her sons had been sent by the Filicchis to Georgetown College. She hoped to find a refuge in some convent in Canada, where her teaching would support her three daughters. Bishop Carroll did not approve, so she relinquished this plan. Father Dubourg, S. S., from St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, met her in New York, and suggested opening in Baltimore a school for girls. After a long delay and many privations, she and her daughters reached Baltimore on Corpus Christi, 1808. Her boys were brought there to St. Mary's College, and she opened a school next to the chapel of St. Mary's Seminary and was delighted with the opportunities for the practice of her religion, for it was only with the greatest difficulty she was able to get to daily Mass and Communion in New York. The convent life for which she had longed ever since her stay in Italy now seemed less impracticable. Her life was that of a religious, and her quaint costume was fashioned after one worn by certain nuns in Italy. Cecilia Conway of Philadelphia, who had contemplated going to Europe to fulfill her religious vocation, joined her; soon other postulants arrived, while the little school had all the pupils it could accommodate.

Mr. Cooper, a Virginian convert and seminarian, offered \$10,000 to found an institution for teaching poor children. A farm was bought half a mile from the village of Emmitsburg and two miles from Mt. St. Mary's College. Meanwhile

Cecilia Seton and her sister Harriet came to Mrs. Seton in Baltimore. As a preliminary to the formation of the new community, Mrs. Seton took vows privately before Archbishop Carroll and her daughter Anna. In June, 1808, the community was transferred to Emmitsburg to take charge of the new institution. The great fervour and mortification of Mother Seton, imitated by her sisters, made the many hardships of their situation seem light. In Dec., 1809, Harriet Seton, who was received into the Church at Emmitsburg, died there, and Cecilia in Apr., 1810. Bishop Flaget was commissioned in 1810 by the community to obtain in France the rules of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. Three of these sisters were to be sent to train the young community in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, but Napoleon forbade them to leave France. The letter announcing their coming is extant at Emmitsburg. The rule, however, with some modifications, was approved by Archbishop Carroll in Jan., 1812, and adopted. Against her will, and despite the fact that she had also to care for her children, Mrs. Seton was elected superior. Many joined the community; Mother Seton's daughter, Anna, died during her novitiate (12 March, 1812), but had been permitted to pronounce her vows on her death-bed. Mother Seton and the eighteen sisters made their vows on 19 July, 1813. The fathers superior of the community were the Sulpicians, Fathers Dubourg, David, and Dubois. Father Dubois held the post for fifteen years and laboured to impress on the community the spirit of St. Vincent's Sisters of Charity, forty of whom he had had under his care in France. The fervour of the community won admiration everywhere. The school for the daughters of the well-to-do prospered, as it continues to do (1912), and enabled the sisters to do much work among the poor. In 1814 the sisters were given charge of an orphan asylum in Philadelphia; in 1817 they were sent to New York. The previous year (1816) Mother Seton's daughter, Rebecca, after long suffering, died at Emmitsburg; her son Richard, who was placed with the Filicchi firm in Italy, died a few years after his mother. William, the eldest, joined the United States Navy and died in 1868. The most distinguished of his children are Most. Rev. Robert Seton, Archbishop of Heliopolis (author of a memoir of his grandmother, "Roman Essays", and many contributions to the "American Catholic Quarterly" and other reviews), and William Seton (q.v.).

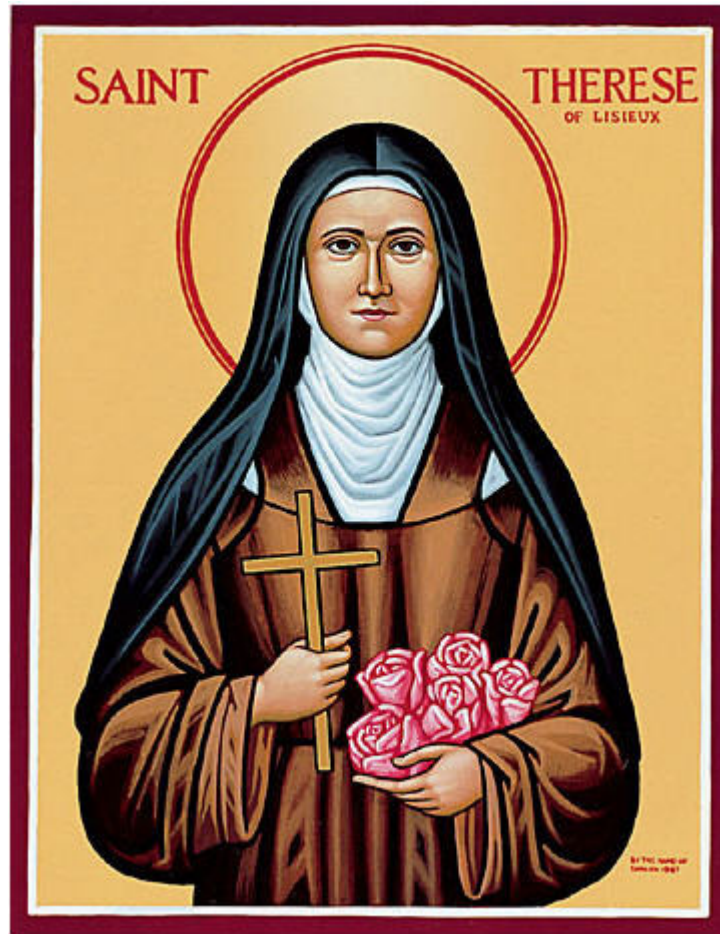
Mother Seton had great facility in writing. Besides the translation of many ascetical French works (including the life of Saint Vincent de Paul, and of Mlle. Le Gras) for her community she has left copious diaries and correspondence that show a soul all on fire with the love of God and zeal for souls. Great spiritual desolation purified her soul during a great portion of her religious life, but she cheerfully took the royal road of the cross. For several years the saintly bishop (then Father) Brutti was her director. The third time she was elected mother (1819) she protested that it was the election of the dead, but she lived for two years, suffering finally from a pulmonary affection. Her perfect sincerity and great charm aided her wonderfully in the work of sanctifying souls. In 1880 Cardinal Gibbons (then Archbishop) urged the steps be taken toward her canonization. The result of the official inquiries in the cause of Mother Seton, held in Baltimore

during several years, were brought to Rome by special messenger, and placed in the hands of the postulator of the cause on 7 June, 1911.

Her cause is entrusted to the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, whose superior general in Paris is also superior of the Sisters of Charity with which the Emmitsburg community was incorporated in 1850, after the withdrawal of the greater number of the sisters (at the suggestion of Archbishop Hughes) of the New York houses in 1846. This union had been contemplated for some time, but the need of a stronger bond at Emmitsburg, shown by the New York separation, hastened it. It was effected with the loss of only the Cincinnati community of six sisters. With the Newark and Halifax offshoots of the New York community and the Greenburg foundation from Cincinnati, the sisters originating from Mother Seton's foundation number (1911) about 6000. The original Emmitsburg community now wearing the cornette and observing the rule just as St. Vincent gave it, naturally surpasses any of the others in number. It is found in about thirty dioceses in the United States, and forms a part of the worldwide sisterhood, whilst the others are rather diocesan communities.

[*Note:* Elizabeth Ann Seton was beatified in 1963 and canonized on September 14, 1975.]

Icon of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux



(Sister Teresa of the Child Jesus)

St. Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, better known as "The Little Flower," St. Therese of Lisieux, was born in Alençon, France on 2 January, 1873. She was the youngest child of Louis and Zélie Martin, who were themselves declared "Venerable" by Pope John Paul II in 1994. died at Lisieux 30 September, 1897.

She was the ninth child of saintly parents, Louis and Zélie Martin, both of whom had wished to consecrate their lives to God in the cloister. The vocation denied them was given to their children, five of whom became religious, one to the Visitation Order and four in the Carmelite Convent of Lisieux. Brought up in an atmosphere of faith where every virtue and aspiration were carefully nurtured and developed, her vocation manifested itself when she was still only a child. Educated by the Benedictines, when she was fifteen she applied for permission to enter the Carmelite Convent, and being refused by the superior, went to Rome with her father, as eager to give her to God as she was to give herself, to seek the consent of the Holy Father, Leo XIII, then celebrating his jubilee. He preferred to leave the decision in the hands of the superior, who finally consented and on 9

April, 1888, at the unusual age of fifteen, Thérèse Martin entered the convent of Lisieux where two of her sisters had preceded her.

Therese lived a life of humility, simplicity, and childlike trust in God. By word and example, she shared this "little way of spiritual childhood" with the novices in her community.

The account of the eleven years of her religious life, marked by signal graces and constant growth in holiness, is given by Soeur Thérèse in her autobiography, written in obedience to her superior and published two years after her death. In 1901 it was translated into English, and in 1912 another translation, the first complete edition of the life of the Servant of God, containing the autobiography, "Letters and Spiritual Counsels", was published. Its success was immediate and it has passed into many editions, spreading far and wide the devotion to this "little" saint of simplicity, and abandonment in God's service, of the perfect accomplishment of small duties.

On the night between Holy Thursday and Good Friday in 1896, Therese experienced her first hemoptysis (spitting up of blood) from tuberculosis. Over the next 18 months, her condition steadily deteriorated. In the months prior to her death, she prayed for the grace to "spend my heaven doing good on earth" and promised that after her death she would send "a shower of roses" from heaven. Offering her sufferings for the salvation of souls, Therese died of tuberculosis on September 30, 1897, at the age of 24.

Upon her death, the nuns received permission to distribute Therese's autobiography, comprised of material that she had written at the command of her superiors and the request of one of her sisters in the monastery. Published on the first anniversary of her death as "The Story of a Soul," the initial printing of 2,000 copies quickly sold out. In the following years, hundreds of thousands of copies of her autobiography were printed, and it was translated into many languages.

As people read about this unknown nun and sought her intercession, letters started pouring into the Carmel reporting favors received through her prayers. By the time she was beatified on April 29, 1923, the Carmel was receiving 800 to 1,000 letters daily.

St. Therese was solemnly canonized by Pope Pius XI on May 17, 1925. On December 14, 1927, Pope Pius XI proclaimed St. Therese Principal Patroness, equal to St. Francis Xavier, of all missionaries, men and women, and of the missions in the whole world. On May 3, 1944, Pope Pius XII named St. Therese Secondary Patroness of France, equal to St. Joan of Arc.

Most recently, Pope John Paul II named St. Therese a Doctor of the Church on October 19, 1997, World Mission Sunday. "Doctor of the Church" is a title given

to a select few saints "on account of the great advantage the whole Church has derived from their doctrine" (Catholic Encyclopedia). She became only the third woman in the Church to be so honored, joining St. Catherine of Siena and St. Teresa of Jesus, foundress of the Discalced Carmelites.

In her life and her writings, St. Therese anticipated the teachings of the Second Vatican Council by showing that the path of holiness is open to all. She understood that what matters in the Christian life is not great deeds, but great love, and that anyone can achieve the heights of holiness by doing even the smallest things well for love of God. "All is well," she wrote, "when one seeks only the will of Jesus."

On her deathbed in 1897 Saint Therese said: "After my death I will let fall a shower of roses." This shower of roses was graces and miracles she bestowed on those who sought her help, symbolically represented in this icon of this holy nun.

The fame of her sanctity and the many miracles performed through her intercession caused the introduction of her cause of canonization only seventeen years after her death, 10 Jun, 1914.

Growing Up

As I was no good at games, I would have spent most of my time reading; luckily, I had visible guardian angels who guided me here and chose the sort of books I needed -- books which nourished my mind and heart, as well as keeping me amused. I was only allowed a certain time for this favorite occupation, and it often meant great self-sacrifice, for I used to put my book away the moment time was up, even if I were halfway through a most fascinating passage. I must admit that, when I read certain tales of chivalry, I did not always grasp the realities of life; in my enthusiasm I wanted to do all the patriotic things the heroines of France had done, especially Joan of Arc.

It was at this time that I was given what I have always considered one of my life's greatest graces, for God did not enlighten me then in the way He does now. He taught me that the only glory which matters is the glory which lasts forever and that one does not have to perform shining deeds to win that, but to hide one's acts of virtue from others, and even from oneself, so that "the left hand does not know what the

right hand is doing." (Cf. *Matt. 6:3*). I was sure that I was born to be great and began to wonder how I should set about winning my glory; then it was revealed to me in my heart that my glory would lie in becoming a Saint, though this glory would be hidden on earth.

This aspiration may seem presumptuous, considering how imperfect I was and still am, even after so many years in religion; yet I am daringly confident that one day I shall become a great Saint. I am not relying on my own merits, because I haven't any. I hope in Him who is virtue and sanctity itself; He alone, content with my frail efforts, will lift me up to Himself, clothe me with His own merits and make me a Saint.

I did not realize in those days that one had to go through much suffering to become a Saint, but God soon brought this home to me by the trials I have told you about already.

But to go back to my story. Three months after I was cured, Father took me away for a delightful holiday, and I began to see something of the world. All around me was joy and happiness. I was entertained, pampered and admired; in fact, for a single fortnight my path was strewn with flowers. But those words of the Book of Wisdom are only too true: *"The bewitching of vanity overturneth the innocent mind."* (Cf. *Wis. 4:12*) When you are only ten, your heart is fascinated very easily, and I must admit that I found this kind of life charming. The world is able to combine so well the search for pleasure with the service of God, forgetting death, yet it has come to so many rich and happy young people I used to know. My mind goes back to their enchanting homes, and I can't help wondering what use to them now are those chateaux and estates where they enjoyed all the world could offer, and I realize that *"all is vanity save loving God and serving Him alone."* (*Imit. 1:1,3*).

I think Jesus wanted me to see something of the world before He came to me for the first time, so that I might choose more surely that path on which I would promise to follow Him.

My First Communion will always be a perfect memory, and I am sure I could not have been better prepared than I was. Do you remember the wonderful little book you gave me three months before the great day? It was set out so beautifully and prepared me surely step by step; even though I had been thinking for so long about my First Communion, I had to renew my ardor and fill my heart with freshly gathered flowers. So every day, I made many sacrifices and acts of love, which were transformed into flowers; some were violets and roses, others cornflowers and daisies or forget-me-nots. I wanted all the flowers on earth to cradle Jesus in my heart. Marie took your place, and I spent hours every evening listening to all the lovely things she said to me. She passed her fine and generous spirit into mine, and as warriors of old used to teach their sons the use of arms, so she trained me for life's battle, stirring up my fervor by showing me the glorious palm of victory.

She told me, too, about the immortal riches one can amass so easily day by day, and of the foolishness of trampling underfoot the treasures one can make one's own by merely stooping to pick them up. She was so eloquent! I wished others could have heard her too, for in my simplicity I was sure she could have converted the most hardened sinners and made them leave the riches that will fade for those of Heaven.

I would have loved to be able to meditate, but Marie thought I was devout enough already and only let me say prayers. One of the mistresses at the Abbey asked me one day what I did with myself when I went home to Les Buissonnets. Shyly, I told her: "Sometimes I go and hide myself in a little corner of my room which I can shut off with my bed curtains, and...just think." She laughed and asked: "But what do you think about?" "About God," I told her; "about how short life is, and about eternity...and...well...I just think." This little incident was not forgotten, and she often used to remind me of it and ask me if I still "thought". I realize now that I was really meditating, while the Divine Master was gently at work in my soul.

The three months of preparation for my First Communion passed quietly, and I soon found myself in retreat at the Abbey as a full boarder. It was a wonderful retreat. I do not think anyone can taste such happiness, except in a religious house. There were not many of us, so we could all have individual attention, and I could never express how grateful I was for the way our mistresses mothered us. I do not know why, but they seemed to watch over me more tenderly than over the others. The first mistress used to come every night with her little lamp and gently draw aside the curtains of my bed; then she would kiss me very tenderly on my forehead. She showed so much affection for me that one evening, touched by her tenderness, I said to her: "O Madame, I am so fond of you. I want to tell you a secret - a big secret." I had been hiding your precious little book from Carmel under my pillow, and now I drew this out to show her, my eyes shining. She opened it very carefully and then told me how lucky I was. Several times during my retreat I realized that there were very few motherless children who were looked after as tenderly as I was at that age. (from her Autobiography)

Fraternal Charity

It was a natural penchant of mine to want perfect order in all things, but more especially in the over-all routine of my daily life at Carmel. I cherished the ideal, at least theoretically, of bringing all my actions and the events of my life together as a unit, to fit in place like the pieces of a child's jigsaw puzzle. It is hardly necessary to add that such an outlook, besides being a source of conflict with others, was to provide me with many jolts on the way.

To give but one example. On a certain afternoon, during my sister's last illness, when I had been counting on finishing some particular work, I was unexpectedly called to the parlour. Later I told Therese with a sigh, "That unfortunate interruption prevented the completion of my task!" She looked up at me and replied: "At the moment of death, such an interruption will be seen in a very different light. You will thank God for it."

My day of recollection each month meant much to me, and I felt that I was entitled to a fair amount of tranquility and order at least during that brief period of solitude. Hence, it became for me something of a problem to decide which Sunday would be best for this day of retreat; an emergency in the Infirmary could arise at any moment, and then there was always the possibility of being pressed into service for some duty elsewhere in the monastery. As this desire for a calm recollection was fast becoming a besetting anxiety with me, Therese spoke to me about it one day. She said:

"It looks as though you go into solitude for your own gratification, and to give an extra little present to self. It should be the other way around. I take my day of retreat each month in a spirit of fidelity to grace and in order to give more to God. If, for example, I have a fair amount of writing planned for that day, I am careful to keep my heart detached, and I reason along these lines: 'I am putting such an hour aside for this task, but in anticipation, I offer up that hour to you, my God. It will probably be punctured by the many unforeseen interruptions and disturbances which usually come my way, so even now, I enter heart and soul into Your plan for me. In fact, I am really counting on being upset and inconvenienced, and if it should turn out that I am left at peace, I shall thank you, my God, for such an unexpected favour.' 'In this way', the Saint added, 'I am always happy and remain in great peace.'"

This advice was typical of Therese, and it was a grace for us to see how she used to put this very counsel to work in the discharge of her duties as Assistant Sacristan. On feast days, when she might have counted on catching up with some special work of her own, she was in the habit of passing the Sacristy from time to time (after she had finished her appointed tasks there) in order to give the first Sacristan an opportunity of pressing her into service again. Needless to say, this silent offer was often accepted.

Knowing that such extra duties must have been fatiguing, I devised a means of making it easy for her to slip away but my efforts were in

vain. She was determined, it was evident, to refuse nothing to the good God.

One day in some matters of trifling importance I had given in to self on several scores. This was Therese's reaction:

"True, no serious harm has been done," she said, "nor has the peace of the community been disturbed, but there are some little ripples on the surface of your soul. We might compare it to the bruising of the downy texture of a little peach. To stand up for your own rights or to insist on justice being done is not necessarily a serious offence against your neighbor, it is true, but your own soul is the loser."

"What can I do, then, to make up?" I asked. "Just turn your eyes lovingly to Jesus," Therese answered, "and recognize your own misery and weakness. That is full reparation. You see, whenever we try to sustain our rights, it is only to our own spiritual detriment. You have no responsibility in the guidance of souls, so, to set about instructing others, even when truth is on your side, is exposing yourself to danger unnecessarily. You are not called upon to be a Justice of the Peace. This right belongs to God alone. But your vocation is to be an Angel of Peace.

Therese frequently urged us to practice great charity in judging others, for, as she used to point out to us, that which seems to be a fault in another is often an act of heroism in the sight of God. The unfinished talk of a nun who may be over-tired or suffering interiorly, she told us, often brings more glory to God than a duty meticulously completed by another nun robust of soul and body. In other words, it is effort and not success that counts most with God. We should judge our neighbour favourably in every circumstance, therefore, and make it become a habit of our lives to overlook his faults. Just as we--almost spontaneously--give ourselves the benefit of the doubt, let us also make this an integral factor of our relations with those about us. And if, in a given case, we cannot ascribe a charitable motive, we can always have recourse, the Saint concluded, to an interpretation like this: Although Sister X is obviously at fault,

evidently she is not conscious of it. If I, on the other hand, have clearer light in the present case, all the more reason why I should use much care in judging her mercifully and myself more severely for my inclination to blame her.

Therese believed that God frequently allows us to experience in ourselves the same weaknesses which we deplore in others, such as absent-mindedness, involuntary negligences, an attitude of boredom or weariness. When we see ourselves fallen into those faults we are then more prompt to excuse them in others.

(by her sister Celine)

My Song Of Today

Oh! how I love Thee, Jesus! my soul aspires to Thee--
And yet for one day only my simple prayer I pray!
Come reign within my heart, smile tenderly on me,
To-day, dear Lord, to-day.

But if I dare take thought of what the morrow brings--
That fills my fickle heart with dreary, dull dismay;
I crave, indeed, my God, trials and sufferings,
But only for to-day!

O sweetest Star of heaven! O Virgin, spotless, blest,
Shining with Jesus' light, guiding to Him my way!
O Mother! 'neath thy veil let my tired spirit rest,
For this brief passing day!

Soon shall I fly afar among the holy choirs,
Then shall be mine the joy that never knows decay;
And then my lips shall sing, to heaven's angelic lyres,
The eternal, glad To-day!

June, 1894.
Saint. Thérèse of Lisieux

Canticle To The Holy Face

Dear Jesus! 'tis Thy Holy Face
Is here the start that guides my way;
Thy countenance, so full of grace,
Is heaven on earth, for me, to-day.
And love finds holy charms for me
In Thy sweet eyes with tear-drops wet;
Through mine own tears I smile at Thee,
And in Thy griefs my pains forget.
How gladly would I live unknown,
Thus to console Thy aching heart.
Thy veiled beauty, it is shown
To those who live from earth apart.
I long to fly to Thee alone!
Thy Face is now my fatherland,
The radiant sunshine of my days,
My realm of love, my sunlit land,
Where, all life long, I sing Thy praise;
It is the lily of the vale,
Whose mystic perfume, freely given,
Brings comfort, when I faint and fail,
And makes me taste the peace of heaven.
Thy face, in its unearthly grace,
Is like the divinest myrrh to me,
That on my heart I gladly place;
It is my lyre of melody;
My rest -- my comfort-- is Thy Face.
My only wealth, Lord! is thy Face;
I ask naught else than this from Thee;
Hid in the secret of that Face,
The more I shall resemble Thee!
Oh, leave on me some impress faint
Of Thy sweet, humble, patient Face,
And soon I shall become a saint,
And draw men to Thy saving grace.

So, in the secret of Thy Face,
Oh! hide me, hide me, Jesus blest!
Ther let me find its hidden grace,
Its holy fires, and, in heaven's rest,
Its rapturous kiss, in Thy embrace!

August 12, 1895.
Saint. Thérèse of Lisieux

To Live Of Love

1.

The eve His life of love drew near its end,
Thus Jesus spoke: "Whoever loveth Me,
And keeps My word as Mine own faithful friend,
My Father, then and I his guests will be;
Within his heart will make Our dwelling above.
Our palace home, true type of heaven above.
There, filled with peace, we will that he shall rest,
With us, in love.

2.

Incarnate Word! Thou Word of God alone!
To live of love, 'tis to abide with Thee.
Thou knowest I love Thee, Jesus Christ, my Own!
Thy Spirit's fire of love enkindleth me.
By loving Thee, I draw the Father here
Down to my heart, to stay with me always.
Blest Trinity! Thou art my prisoner dear,
Of love, to-day.

3.

To live of love, 'tis by Thy life to live,
O glorious King, my chosen, sole Delight!
Hid in the Host, how often Thou dost give

Thyself to those who seek Thy radiant light.
Then hid shall be my life, unmarked, unknown,
That I may have Thee heart to heart with me;
For loving souls desire to be alone,
With love, and Thee!

4.

To live of love, 'tis not to fix one's tent
On Tabor's height and there with Thee remain.
'Tis to climb Calvary with strength nigh spent,
And count Thy heavy cross our truest gain.
In heaven, my life a life of joy shall be,
The heavy cross shall then be gone for aye.
Here upon earth, in suffering with Thee,
Love! let me stay.

5.

To live of love, 'tis without stint to give,
An never count the cost, nor ask reward;
So, counting not the cost, I long to live
And show my dauntless love for Thee, dear Lord!
O Heart Divine, o'erflowing with tenderness,
How swift I run, who all to Thee has given!
Naught but Thy love I need, my life to bless.
That love is heaven!

6.

To live of love, it is to know no fear;
No memory of past faults can I recall;
No imprint of my sins remaineth here;
The fire of Love divine effaces all.
O sacred flames! O furnace of delight!
I sing my safe sweet happiness to prove.
In these mild fires I dwell by day, by night.

I live of love!

7.

To live of love, 'tis in my heart to guard
A mighty treasure in a fragile vase.
Weak, weak, am I, O well-beloved Lord!
Nor have I yet an angel's perfect grace.
But, if I fall each hour that hurries by,
Thou com'st to me from Thy bright home above,
And, raising me, dost give me strength to cry:
I live of love!

8.

To live of love it is to sail afar
And bring both peace and joy where'er I be.
O Pilot blest! love is my guiding star;
In every soul I meet, Thyself I see.
Safe sail I on, through wind or rain or ice;
Love urges me, love conquers every gale.
High on my mast behold is my device:
"By love I sail!"

9.

To live of love, it is when Jesus sleeps
To sleep near Him, though stormy waves beat nigh.
Deem not I shall awake Him! On these deeps
Peace reigns, like that the Blessed know on high.
To Hope, the voyage seems one little day;
Faith's hand shall soon the veil between remove;
'Tis Charity that swells my sail alway.
I live of love!

10.

To live of love, O Master dearest, best!
It is to beg Thee light Thy holiest fires
Within the soul of each anointed priest,
Till he shall feel the Seraphim's desires;
It is to beg Thee guard Thy Church, O Christ!
For this I plead with Thee by night, by day;
And give myself, in sacrifice unpriced,
With love alway!

11.

To live of love, it is to dry Thy tears,
To seek for pardon for each sinful soul,
To strive to save all men from doubts and fears,
And bring them home to Thy benign control.
Comes to my ear sin's wild and blasphemous roar;
So, to efface each day, that burning shame,
I cry: "O Jesus Christ! I Thee adore.
I love Thy Name!"

12.

To live of love, 'tis Mary's part to share,
To bathe with tears and odorous perfume
Thy holy feet, to wipe them with my hair,
To kiss them; then still loftier lot assume,
To rise, and by Thy side to take my place,
And pour my ointments on Thy holy head.
But with no balsams I embalm Thy Face!
'Tis love, instead!

13.

"To live of love, what foolishness she sings!"
So cries the world. "Renounce such idle joy!
Waste not thy perfumes on such trivial things.

In useful arts thy talents now employ!"
To love Thee, Jesus! Ah, this loss is gain;
For all my perfumes no reward seek I.
Quitting the world, I sing in death's sweet pain:
Of love I die!

14.

To die of love, O martyrdom most blest!
For this I long, this is my heart's desire;
My exile ends; I soon will be at rest.
Ye Cherubim, lend, lend to me your lyre!
O dart of Seraphim, O flame of love,
Consume me wholly; hear my ardent cry!
Jesu, make real my dream! Come Holy Dove!
Of love I die!

15.

To die of love, behold my life's long hope!
God is my one exceeding great reward.
He of my wishes forms the end and scope;
Him only do I seek; my dearest Lord.
With passionate love for Him my heart is riven.
O may He quickly come! He draweth nigh!
Behold my destiny, behold my heaven,--
OF LOVE TO DIE.

February 25, 1895
Saint. Thérèse of Lisieux

My Armor

TO A NOVICE FOR HER PROFESSION DAY.

“The spouse of the King is terrible as an army set in array; She is like to a choir of music on a field of battle.”
Canticles vi. 3; vii.

“Put you on the armor of God that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil.”
Ephesians vi. II.

With heavenly armor am I clad to-day;
The hand of God has thus invested me.
What now from Him could tear my heart away;
What henceforth come between my God and me?
With Him for Guide, the fight I face serene;
Nor furious fire, nor foe, nor death, I fear.
My enemies shall know I am a queen,
The spouse of God, most high, most dear.
This armor I shall keep while life shall last;
Thou, Thou, hast given it Me, my King, my Spouse!
My fairest, brightest gems, by naught on earth surpast,
Shall be my sacred vows.
My first dear sacrifice, O Poverty,
Thou shalt go with me till my dying hour.
Detached from all things must the athlete be,
If he the race would run, and prove his power
Taste, worldly men! regret, remorse and pain,
The bitter fruits of earthly, vain desire;
The glorious palms of Poverty I gain,
I who to God alone aspire.
“Who would My heavenly Kingdom have from Me,
He must use violence,” so Jesus said.
Ah well then! Poverty my mighty lance shall be,
The helmet for my head.
The pure white Angels’ sister now am I;
My vow of Chastity has made me so.
Ah, how I hope one day with them to fly!
Meanwhile to daily combat must I go.
For my great Spouse, of every lord the Lord,
Struggle must I, with neither truce nor rest;
And Chastity shall be my heavenly sword.
To win men’s souls to Jesus’ breast.

O Chastity, my sword invincible!
To overcome my foes thou hast sufficed;
By thee am I — O joy ineffable! —
The Spouse of Jesus Christ.
The proud, proud angel, in the realms of light,
Cried out, rebellious: "I will not obey!"
But I shall cry, throughout earth's dreary night,
"With all my heart, I will obey alway!"
With holy boldness all my soul is steeled,
Against hell's wild attacks I bravely dart;
Obedience is my firm and mighty shield,
The buckler on my valiant heart.
O conquering God! no other prize I seek,
Than to submit with all my heart to Thee;
Of victories th' obedient man shall speak
Through all eternity.
If now a soldier's weapon I can wield,
If valiantly like him the foe I face,
I also long to sing upon the field,
As sang the glorious Virgin of all grace.
Thou mak'st the chords to vibrate of *Thy Lyre*.
That lyre, O Jesus! is *my loving heart*;
To sing Thy mercies is that heart's desire.
How sweet, how strong, how dear, Thou art.
With radiant smile, Thou Spouse, my heart's Delight,
I go to meet all foes from hell's dark land;
And singing I shall die, upon the field of fight,
My weapons in my hand.

June, 1894.
Saint. Thérèse of Lisieux

To The Sacred Heart

Beside the tomb wept Magdalen at dawn,
She sought to find the dead and buried Christ;
Nothing could fill the void now He was gone,
No one to soothe her burning grief sufficed.
Not even you, Archangels heaven-assigned!
To her could bring content that dreary day.
Your buried King, alone, she longed to find,
And bear His lifeless body far away.
Beside His tomb she there the last remained,
And there again was she before the sun;
There, too, to come to her the Saviour deigned,
He would not be, by her, in love outdone.
Gently He showed her then His blessed Face,
And one word sprang from His deep Heart's recess:
Mary! His voice she knew, she knew its grace;
It came with perfect peace her heart to bless.
One day, my God! I, too, like Magdalen,
Desired to find Thee, to draw near to Thee;
So, over earth's immense, wide-stretching plain,
I sought its Master and its King to see.
Then cried I, though I saw the flowers bloom
In beauty 'neath green trees and azure skies:
O brilliant Nature! thou art one vast tomb,
Unless God's Face shall greet my longing eyes.
A heart I need, to soothe me and to bless,
A strong support that can not pass away,
To love me wholly, e'en my feebleness,
And never leave me through the night or day.
There is not one created thing below,
Can love me truly, and can never die.
God become man none else' my needs can know;
He, He alone, can understand my cry.
Thou comprehendest all I need, dear Lord!
To win my heart, from heaven Thou didst come;
For me Thy blood didst shed, O King adored!
And on our altars makest Thy home.
So, if I may not here behold Thy Face,
Or catch the heavenly music of Thy voice,
I still can live, each moment, by Thy grace,
And in Thy Sacred Heart I can rejoice.
O Heart of Jesus, wealth of tenderness!

My joy Thou art, in Thee I safely hide.
Thou, who my earliest youth didst charm and bless,
Till my last evening, oh! with me abide,
All that I had, to Thee I wholly gave,
To Thee each deep desire of mine is known.
Whoso his life shall lose, that life shall save;
Let mine be ever lost in Thine alone!
I know it well,-no righteousness of mine
Hath any value in Thy searching eyes;
Its every breath my heart must draw from Thine,
To make of worth my life's long sacrifice.
Thou hast not found Thine angels without taint;
Thy Law amid the thunderbolts was given;
And yet, my Jesus! I nor fear nor faint.
For me, on Calvary, Thy Heart was riven.
To see Thee in Thy glory face to face,
I know it well,- the soul must pass through fires.
Choose I on earth my purgatorial place,
The flaming love of Thy great Heart's desires!
So shall my exiled soul, to death's command,
Make answer with one cry of perfect love;
Then flying straight to heaven its Fatherland,
Shall reach with no delay that home above.

October, 1895
Saint. Thérèse of Lisieux

I Thirst For Love

In wondrous love Thou didst come down from heaven
To immolate Thyself, O Christ, for me;
So, in my turn, my love to Thee is given,
I wish to suffer and to die for Thee.
Thou, Lord, hast spoken this truth benign:
"To die for one loved tenderly
Of greatest love on earth is sign;
And now, such love is mine,
Such love for Thee!
Abide, abide with me, O Pilgrim blest!"
Behind the hill fast sinks the dying day.
Helped by Thy cross I mount the rocky crest;
Oh, come, to guide me on my heavenward way.
To be like Thee is my desire;
Thy voice finds echo in my soul.
Suffering I crave! Thy words of fire
Lift me above earth's mire,
And sin's control.
Chanting Thy victories, gloriously sublime,
The Seraphim ?- all heaven ?- cry to me,
That even Thou, to conquer sin and crime,
upon this earth a sufferer needs must be.
For me, upon life's dreary way,
What scorn, what anguish, Thou didst bear
Let me grow humble every day,
Be least of all, alway,
Thy lot to share!
Ah, Christ! Thy great example teaches me
Myself to humble, honors to despise.
Little and low like Thee I choose to be,
Forgetting self, so I may charm Thine eyes.
My peace I find in solitude,
Nor ask I more, dear Lord, than this:
Be Thou my sole beatitude,
Ever, in Thee, renewed
My joy, my bliss!
Thou, the great God whom earth and heaven adore,
Thou dwellest a prisoner for me night and day;
And every hour I hear Thy voice implore:
"I thirst ? I thirst ? I thirst ? for love alway!
I, too, Thy prisoner am I;

I, too, cry ever unto Thee
Thine own divine and tender cry:
"I thirst! Oh, let me die
Of love for Thee!"
For love of Thee I thirst! Fulfil my hope;
Augment in me Thine own celestial flame!
For love of Thee I thirst! Too scant earth's scope.
The glorious Vision of Thy Face I claim!
My long slow martyrdom of fire
Still more and more consumeth me.
Thou art my joy, my one desire.
Jesu! may I expire
Of love for Thee!

April 30, 1896
Saint. Thérèse of Lisieux

Jesus Only

Oh, how my heart would spend itself, to bless;
It hath such need to prove its tenderness!
And yet what heart can my heart comprehend?
What heart shall always love me without end?
All — all in vain for such return seek I;
Jesus alone my soul can satisfy.
Naught else contents or charms me here below;
Created things no lasting joy bestow.
My peace, my joy, my love, O Christ!
'Tis Thou alone! Thou hast sufficed
Thou didst know how to make a mother's heart;
Tenderest of fathers, Lord! to me Thou art.
My only Love, Jesus, Divinest Word!
More than maternal is Thy heart, dear Lord!
Each moment Thou my way dost guard and guide;
I call — at once I find Thee at my side —
And if, sometimes Thou hid'st Thy face from me,
Thou com'st Thyself to help me seek for Thee.
Thee, Thee, alone I choose: I am Thy bride.
Unto Thy arms I hasten, there to hide.
Thee would I love, as little children love;
For Thee, like warrior bold, my love I'd prove.
Now, like to children, full of joy and glee,

So come I, Lord! to show my love to Thee;
Yet, like a warrior bold with high elation,
Rush I to combats in my blest vocation.
Thy Heart is Guardian of our innocence;
Not once shall it deceive my confidence.
Wholly my hopes are placed in Thee, dear Lord!
After long exile, I Thy Face adored
In heaven shall see. When clouds the skies o'erspread.
To Thee, my Jesus! I lift up my head;
For, in Thy tender glance, these words I see:
"O child! I made My radiant heaven for thee."
I know it well — my burning tears and sighs
Are full of charm for Thy benignant eyes.
Strong seraphs form in heaven Thy court divine,
Yet Thou dost seek this poor weak heart of mine.
Ah! take my heart! Jesus, 'tis Thine alone;
All my desires I yield to Thee, my Own!
And all my friends, that are so loved by me,
No longer will I love them, save in Thee!

June, 1894

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

My Heaven On Earth

To bear my exile now, within this world of tears,
The holy tender glance of Christ, my Lord, I need.
That glance, surcharged with love, consoles me through the years;
His loveliness displays foretaste of heaven indeed.
On me my Jesus smiles, when toward Him I aspire,
The trial of my faith then weighs no more on me.
That love-glance of my God, that smile of holy fire,
Oh, this is heaven for me!
'Tis heaven to have the power, great grace from Christ to win
For Holy Mother Church, for all my Sisters dear,-
For every soul on earth that He may enter in,
Enflame our sinful hearts, and grant us joy and cheer.
All things my love can gain when, heart to heart, I pray,
Alone with Jesus Christ in speechless ecstasy.
Beside His altar blest with Him I gladly stay,--
Oh, this is heaven for me!

My heaven within the Host safe hid and peaceful, lies,
Where Jesus Christ abides, divinest, fairest Fair.
From that great fount of love doth endless life arise;
There, day and night, my Lord doth hearken to my prayer.
When, in Thy perfect love (O moment blest and bright!)
Thou comest, Spouse most pure, me to transform in Thee,
That union of our hearts, that rapture of delight,-
Oh, this is heaven for me!

My heaven it is to feel in me some likeness blest
To Him who made me and my soul hath reconciled;
My heaven it is always beneath His eye to rest.
To call Him Father dear, and be His loving child.
Safe shielded in His arms, no storm my soul can fear;
Complete abandonment my only law shall be.
To sleep upon His Heart, with His blest Face so near,-
Oh, this is heaven for me!

My heaven is God alone, the Trinity Divine,
Who dwells within my heart, the Prisoner of my love.
There, contemplating Thee, I tell Thee Thou art mine;
Thee will I love and serve until we meet above.

My heaven it is to smile on Thee whom I adore,
E'en when, to try my faith, from me Thou hidest Thee;
Calmly on Thee to smile, until Thou smil'st once more,-
Oh, this is heaven to me!

June 7, 1896.
Saint. Thérèse of Lisieux



Do You Realize...

"Do you realize that Jesus is there in the tabernacle expressly for you - for you alone? He burns with the desire to come into your heart...don't listen to the demon, laugh at him, and go without fear to receive the Jesus of peace and love..."

"Receive Communion often, very often...there you have the sole remedy, if you want to be cured. Jesus has not put this attraction in your heart for nothing..."

"The guest of our soul knows our misery; He comes to find an empty tent within us - that is all He asks."

Saint. Thérèse of Lisieux

Saint of: AIDS sufferers, tuberculosis, aircraft pilots, missionaries, France

Icon of Saint Francis Xavier Cabrini



Feast Day: November 13, December 22

Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus A religious congregation having its general mother house at Rome, founded in 1880 by Mother Francis Xavier Cabrini, who is still living. The aim of the institute is to spread devotion to the Heart of Jesus by means of the practice of spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The sisters conduct homes for the aged and the sick, orphanages, industrial schools, sewing classes; they visit hospitals and prisons, and give religious instruction in their convents, which are open to women desirous of making retreats. The congregation has spread rapidly in Europe and America. In 1899, at the suggestion of Leo XIII, the sisters came to New York, and have since opened convents in the Dioceses of Brooklyn, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Newark, Scranton, and Seattle. At the beginning of 1911 the institute had in the United States: 253 sisters; 11 schools with 4850 pupils; 6 orphanages with 713 orphans;

2 hospitals with about 3520 patients annually; and 1 dispensary where 21,630 persons were treated during the preceding years.

This congregation is to be distinguished from the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, founded by Father Hubert Linckens, provincial of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Hilstrup, near Munster, on 3 August, 1899, and approved episcopally in 1900. The latter sisters are engaged teaching in New Guiana, New Pomerania, and the Marshall Islands, in the districts confided to the care of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

Prayer to Saint Francis Xavier Cabrini

God, through the works of Saint Francis Cabrini You brought comfort and love to the immigrants and all those in need. May her example and work be continued in the lives of those dedicated to you. Amen.

Prayer for the Feast of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who hast conducted the holy virgin Frances Xavier, kindled with the flame of the Most Sacred Heart, across the world to gain souls to Thee, and founded through her a new family of virgins in Thy Church: grant, we beseech Thee, that through her intercession, we may be endowed with the virtues of Thy Heart, and may be found worthy to reach the haven of eternal happiness. Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

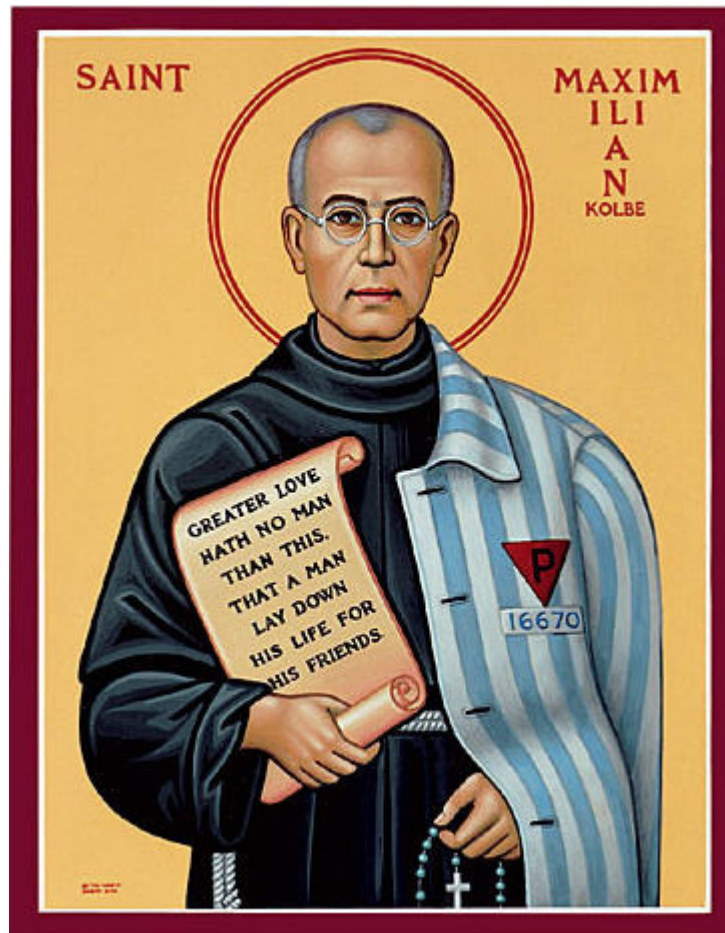
Prayer to Saint Francis Xavier Cabrini for Children

Holy Spirit, when Saint Frances was a child, she pretended she was a missionary to China as she sailed paper boats on a

stream. Although You eventually sent her west to America instead of East to the Orient, her childhood games shaped her desire to serve You. I ask her to pray for our children to be protected from the lure of games that are worldly, violent, or occultic. O Lord, prevent society's influences from blocking their desire to serve You when they grow up. Touch their souls to make them uneasy about games that erode their love for You and teach them to listen to Your guidance. Saint Frances, pray for us. Amen.

Patron of: emigrants, immigrants, hospital administrators, orphans

**Icon of
Saint Maximilian Kolbe**



Also known as the Apostle of Consecration to Mary;
Massimiliano Maria Kolbe; Maximilian Mary Kolbe; Raymond Kolbe

Memorial

[14 August](#)

Born 7 January 1894 at Zdunska Wola, Poland as Raymond Kolbe. He was the Second of three sons born to a poor but pious Catholic family in Russian occupied Poland. His parents, both Franciscan lay tertiaries, worked at home as weavers. His father, Julius, later ran a religious book store, then enlisted in Pilsudski's army, fought for Polish independence from Russia, and was hanged by the Russians as a traitor in 1914. His mother, Marianne Dabrowska, later became a Benedictine nun. His brother Alphonse became a priest.

Raymond was known as a mischievous child, sometimes considered wild, and a trial to his parents. However, in 1906 at Pabianice, at age twelve and around the time of his first Communion, he received a vision of the Virgin Mary that changed his life.

I asked the Mother of God what was to become of me. Then she came to me holding two crowns, one white, the other red. She asked if I was

willing to accept either of these crowns. The white one meant that I should persevere in purity, and the red that I should become a martyr. I said that I would accept them both.

-Saint Maximilian

He entered the Franciscan junior seminary in Lwow, Poland in 1907 where he excelled in mathematics and physics. For a while he wanted to abandon the priesthood for the military, but eventually relented to the call to religious life, and on 4 September 1910 he became a novice in the Conventual Franciscan Order at age 16. He took the name Maximilian, made his first vows on 5 September 1911, his final vows on 1 November 1914.

Studied philosophy at the Jesuit Gregorian College in Rome from 1912 to 1915, and theology at the Franciscan Collegio Serafico in Rome from 1915 to 1919. On 16 October 1917, while still in seminary, he and six friends founded the *Immaculata Movement* (*Militia Immaculatae*, *Crusade of Mary Immaculate*) devoted to the conversion of sinners, opposition to freemasonry (which was extremely anti-Catholic at the time), spread of the Miraculous Medal (which they wore as their habit), and devotion to Our Lady and the path to Christ. Stricken with tuberculosis which nearly killed him, and left him in frail health the rest of his life. Ordained on 28 April 1918 in Rome at age 24. Received his *Doctor of Theology* on 22 July 1922; his insights into Marian theology echo today through their influence on Vatican II.

Maximilian returned to Poland on 29 July 1919 to teach history in the Crakow seminary. He had to take a medical leave from 10 August 1920 to 28 April 1921 to be treated for tuberculosis at the hospital at Zakpane in the Tatra Mountains. In January 1922 he began publication of the magazine *Knight of the Immaculate* to fight religious apathy; by 1927 the magazine had a press run of 70,000 issues. He was forced to take another medical leave from 18 September 1926 to 13 April 1927, but the work continued. The friaries from which he had worked were not large enough for his work, and in 1927 Polish Prince Jan Drucko-Lubecki gave him land at Teresin near Warsaw. There he founded a new monastery of Niepokalanow, the *City of the Immaculate* which was consecrated on 8 December 1927. At its peak the *Knight of the Immaculate* had a press run of 750,000 copies a month. A junior seminary was started on the grounds in 1929. In 1935 the house began printing a daily Catholic newspaper, *The Little Daily* with a press run of 137,000 on work days, 225,000 on Sundays and holy days.

Not content with his work in Poland, Maximilian and four brothers left for Japan in 1930. Within a month of their arrival, penniless and knowing no Japanese, Maximilian was printing a Japanese version of the *Knight*; the magazine, *Seibo no Kishi* grew to a circulation of 65,000 by 1936. In 1931 he founded a monastery in Nagasaki, Japan comparable to Niepokalanow. It survived the war, including the nuclear bombing, and serves today as a center of Franciscan work in Japan.

In mid-1932 he left Japan for Malabar, India where he founded a third Niepokalanow house. However, due to a lack of manpower, it did not survive.

Poor health forced him to curtail his missionary work and return to Poland in 1936. On 8 December 1938 the monastery started its own radio station. By 1939 the monastery housed a religious community of nearly 800 men, the largest in the world in its day, and was completely self-sufficient including medical facilities and a fire brigade staffed by the religious brothers.

Arrested with several of his brothers on 19 September 1939 following the Nazi invasion of Poland. Others at the monastery were briefly exiled, but the prisoners were released on 8 December 1939, and the men returned to their work. Back at Niepokalanow he continued his priestly ministry, The brothers housed 3,000 Polish refugees, two-thirds of whom were Jewish, and continued their publication work, including materials considered anti-Nazi. For this work the presses were shut down, the congregation suppressed, the brothers dispersed, and Maximilian was imprisoned in Pawiak prison, Warsaw, Poland on 17 February 1941.

On 28 May 1941 he was transferred to Auschwitz and branded as prisoner 16670. He was assigned to a special work group staffed by priests and supervised by especially vicious and abusive guards. His calm dedication to the faith brought him the worst jobs available, and more beatings than anyone else. At one point he was beaten, lashed, and left for dead. The prisoners managed to smuggle him into the camp hospital where he spent his recovery time hearing confessions. When he returned to the camp, Maximilian ministered to other prisoners, including conducting Mass and delivering communion using smuggled bread and wine.

In July 1941 there was an escape from the camp. Camp protocol, designed to make the prisoners guard each other, required that ten men be slaughtered in retribution for each escaped prisoner. Francis Gajowniczek, a married man with young children was chosen to die for the escape. Maximilian volunteered to take his place, and died as he had always wished - in service. He died on 14 August 1941 by lethal carbonic acid injection after three weeks of starvation and dehydration at Auschwitz. His body was burned in the ovens and his ashes scattered

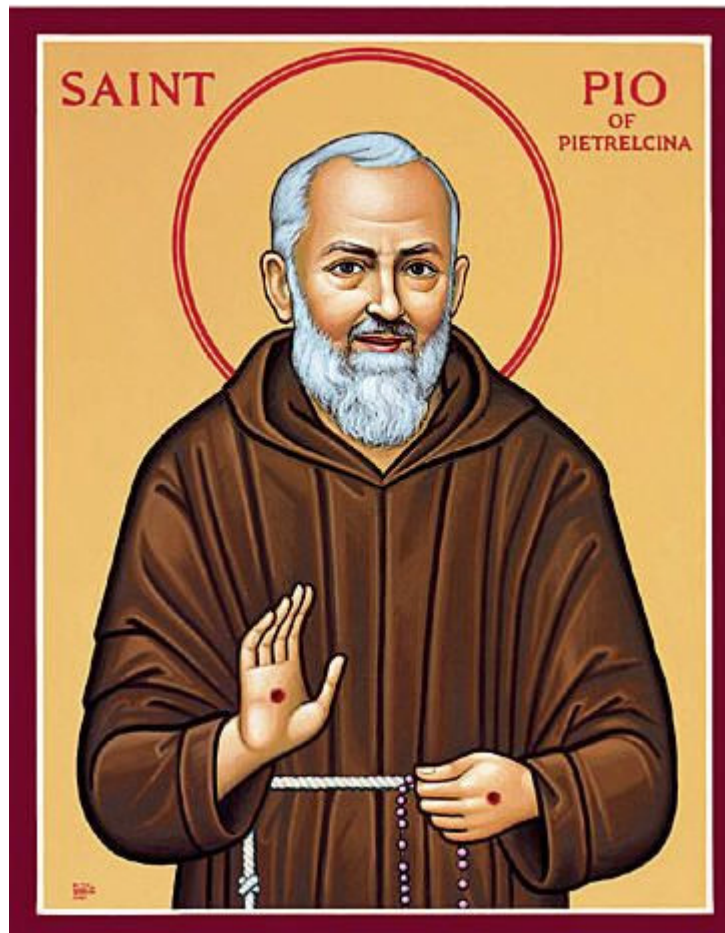
Maximilian was Beatified on 17 October 1971 by Pope Paul VI; his beatification miracles include the July 1948 cure of intestinal tuberculosis of Angela Testoni, and August 1950 cure of calcification of the arteries/sclerosis of Francis Ranier. He was Canonized on 10 October 1982 by Pope John Paul II; declared a martyr of charity

Prayer to Saint Maximilian Kolbe for the Imprisoned and Addicted

Dear Christ, Saint Maximilian was imprisoned in Auschwitz where he ministered to the captives and celebrated Mass by consecrating bread and wine that had been smuggled in. He was martyred after he voluntarily took the place of a young married prisoner condemned to die. Since he's the patron saint of drug addicts and people in prison, I ask him to intercede for the inmates in our jails. O Lord, heal their hearts and protect them from the evil that surrounds them. I also ask him to pray for the addicts in my family and my friends' families. O Lord, set them free from the prison of their addictions. Saint Maximilian, pray for us. Amen.

Saint of: drug addiction, drug addicts, families, imprisoned people, journalists, political prisoners, prisoners, pro-life movement

Icon of
Saint Padre Pio
of Pietrelcina



VATICAN CITY June 16, 2002 Before one of the largest crowds ever to fill the Vatican area, Pope John Paul Sunday made a saint of Padre Pio, a 20th century mystic monk who is said to have borne the bleeding wounds of Christ for 50 years. Hundreds of thousands of people from around the world thronged St. Peter's Square and all the streets in the vicinity for hours before the ceremony started in front of Christendom's largest church. The Pope, who is said to be particularly devoted to the Franciscan Capuchin monk who died in 1968 at the age of 81, presided at a solemn ceremony to canonize one of the 20th century's most popular Roman Catholic figures.

Padre Pio was born on May 25, 1887. He was baptised Francis. Even as a child he had extraordinary gifts. While his brothers and sisters played, he prayed. When he was a teenager he received a present of chestnuts wrapped in a bag. He returned the bag to the sender of the gifts, a woman. The woman saved the bag, she thought it might be a future relic. This woman was in her barn when a spark ignited powder and there was a terrible explosion. She was in great pain, and bleeding from a serious wound. She remembered the bag and placed it to herself. She was instantly cured. This was the first miracle God performed through Padre Pio, he was 13 years old. At the age of 15 Padre Pio entered the Capuchins despite the fact that he was in bad health. One day he heard a voice

from the tabernacle: "You will be scourged, crown with thorns and nailed to the cross like St. Francis."

Padre Pio was a martyr of the confessional. Sometimes he would hear confessions as long as 18 hours a day. He wrote to a friend: "I am well but I am very busy day and night hearing hundreds of confessions daily, I have not a minute left but praise to Christ, who powerfully assists me in my work."

A fellow friar, Padre Alessio recalls an incident when he entered Padre Pio's room and found him shivering. The weather was warm but he appeared to be freezing. He later learned that the mystic had been hearing the confession of a man dying high in the snowy mountains.

To a woman who did not know what to say in the confessional, Padre Pio said, "Hurry down to the pond, look into the water, and then come back again. In the pond she saw her baby which she had murdered and thrust into the pond 19 years before. All aghast, she confessed her great guilt to him.

A murderer, whose conscience did not leave him at ease, arrived one day at Father's confessional, hoping to regain his peace of mind by his absolution. He confessed several sins of his life, but in spite of his good intentions he could not find the courage to confess the sin of murder. After his imperfect confession, Padre Pio led him along a row of seats alongside of his confessional where men were sitting. Suddenly, the man screamed and lost consciousness. When he recovered, Padre Pio took him back to the confessional. After awhile, the man exited the confessional with a radiant face. He had been absolved of all his sins. He explained to people that through Padre Pio's prayer, he had seen the murdered man sitting there in the pew. That sight had brought the atrocity of his deed to his mind so vividly that he had found the courage to confess the grave sin.

Another time a blind girl was led to his confessional. She needed the assistance of someone to guide her. In the confessional she told Padre Pio that she, as well as her four sisters were blind. She asked him to pray for her. They prayed together, she folded her hands in prayer and he placed his wounded hands over hers. She suddenly cried out, "Father I see." She sobbed and when she calmed down she quietly left the confessional with no aides. The people who witnessed began to cry out "I believe, I believe."

Padre Pio also used his edgy toughness as a means of controlling his feelings. Once, for example a woman carried a wicker suitcase into his confessional. With loud sobs and shrieks, she opened it to show him her six-month-old son, who had died on the way to San Giovanni Rotundo. Padre gently lifted the tiny body into his arms and prayed briefly. Then he growled at the mother, 'Why are you yelling so much? Don't you see that your son is sleeping?' When the baby returned to life, Padre Pio had to fight back tears of joy. He said that he resorted

to toughness in situations like this to prevent himself from being overwhelmed by his tender emotions.

Gemma, a little girl, was born without pupils, she was blind. Her grandmother took her to Padre Pio and both went to confession to him. Gemma's grandmother asked for graces for little Gemma to see. Gemma was very disturbed because she forgot to ask him.

He said to the grandmother, "Do you have faith my daughter? The child must not weep and neither should you for the child sees..." Padre Pio gave her, her first Holy Communion. After the distribution of Holy Communion, Padre went to the altar again and placed his hands over Gemma's eyes and made the sign of the cross. When traveling, she began to see. She had her vision restored, but she has no pupils! Many, many eye specialists had examined Gemma but they had no scientific explanation.

So many people want to know more about St. Padre Pio. Who is this man who cured the blind, Who could be in two places at the same time, Who spoke many languages in the confessional, Who was a good priest, Who bore the wounds of Christ, Who suffered greatly, Who prayed constantly, Who touched so many lives, Who loved Jesus and Mary, Who had a constant relationship with his guardian angel, Who was a Saint?

Padre Pio had frequent bouts with the devil. He had a great devotion to his guardian angel and St. Michael the Archangel.

Assaults by the devil were not uncommon to the good Padre. It's as if the devil was aware of the goodness of this man from the beginning in the seminary. The devil would try to intimidate the soul of Padre Pio, tempt him with the most vile scenes and even approach him as the "angel of light" (devil). One day the devil approached Padre as his superior and requested that he cease his prayers and penances. Padre asked this friar to repeat after him....."Blessed Be Jesus!" The "friar" ran out and disappeared, leaving behind him smoke and the scent of sulfur. Satan would make disgusting noises, shouts, screams, and even spite at him and fling him around. There were many physical bouts, which left Padre bruised and shook-up. Obviously, God permitted this for the good of souls and the good of Padre Pio's soul. Perhaps God permitted this for the souls of those who would be his spiritual children or those who would break with the bond of sin.

One thing is clear...the devil is real despite the secular thinking of many.

Padre Pio had great love for Angels. He had a personal relationship and apparitions with St. Michael the Archangel, his Guardian Angel, and various other Angels.

Starting as a child, he would rely on his Guardian Angel to do many tasks. He petitioned St. Michael to take souls out of the hands of the devil. Padre Pio would call upon his angel to translate other languages, in the confessional and in letters. He would ask people who needed help to send him their Guardian Angel with prayer requests. He told one man that he was up all night receiving prayer requests from the angels.

He would say: "May the angels of God open closed doors for you."

Padre Pio had a great devotion to the Blessed Mother. He called her "my dear little Mother." One of the friars asked him if Our Lady ever appeared in his room. He replied that you should ask if there was ever a time she was not in your room. He constantly prayed the Rosary. When anyone thanked him for his intervention in their lives through his gifts he would say: "You should thank the Blessed Mother, she is the Mediatrix of all Graces."

He attributed the cure of one of his illnesses to Mary.

Referring to her he said: "Love the Madonna and pray the rosary, for Her Rosary is the weapon against the evils of the world today."

Padre Pio died on September 23, 1968. The last thing he said was: "Jesus.....Mary." But moments before that he stared into space as if he was looking into eternity and said: "I see two mothers."

It is estimated that more than a hundred thousand people were in attendance of his funeral. People followed the body through the streets to the Church. There was an outdoor Mass. Padre Pio was buried in the crypt beneath the Church.

Many people predicted that San Giovanni Rotondo(place of the friary) would no longer remain the tourist attraction it once was. They were wrong as thousands of people continue to visit the sites associated with this very holy man. When a friar was questioned regarding the thousands of miracles during Padre Pio's life, he replied: "It would be more significant to talk about the miracles that have taken place since his death"...right up to this very day.

Padre Pio, priest, miracle worker, stigmatic and.....A canonized Saint!

Padre Pio: "I shall be able to do much more for you when I'm in heaven than I can now while I am on earth."

The Church declared Padre Pio "Saint" on June 16, 2002.

Saint Padre Pio pray for us!

As you said: "May God's angels open closed doors for you."

O Jesus, full of grace and charity, victim for sinners, so impelled by love for us that you willed to die on the cross, I humbly beseech you to glorify in heaven and on earth the Servant of God, Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, who generously participated in your sufferings, who loved you so much and labored so faithfully for the glory of your heavenly Father and for the good of souls. With confidence I beseech you to grant me, through his intercession, the grace of which I ardently desire. Glory be to the Father. (three times).

Prayer to Saint Padre Pio of Pietrelcina

O Glorious Saint Pio, bearing the wounds of Christ you generously accepted your sufferings, and labored faithfully for the good of all souls. Help me to embrace that same attitude of acceptance in my life.

With confidence, I ask for your intercession to obtain the grace of my prayer request, which I ardently desire. if it is not, however, God's will that this should come to pass, then help me to find serenity and joy in God's choices for me.

Amen

A Prayer to Padre Pio

Beloved Padre Pio, today I come to add my prayer to the thousands of prayers offered to you every day by those who love and venerate you. They ask for cures and healings, earthly and spiritual blessings, and peace for body and mind. And because of your friendship with the Lord, he heals those you ask to be healed, and forgives those you forgive.

Through your visible wounds of the Cross, which you bore for 50 years, you were chosen in our time to glorify the crucified Jesus. Because the Cross has been replaced by other symbols, please help us to bring it back in our midst, for we acknowledge it is the only true sign of salvation.

As we lovingly recall the wounds that pierced your hands, feet and side, we not only remember the blood you shed in pain, but your smile, and the invisible halo of sweet smelling flowers that surrounded your presence, the perfume of sanctity.

Padre Pio, may the healings of the sick become the testimony that the Lord has invited you to join the holy company of Saints. In your kindness, please help me with my own special request: (mention here your petition, and make the sign of the Cross).

Bless me and my loved ones. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The following quotes of Padre Pio tell how he looked after and loved his spiritual family:

'I love my Spiritual Children as much as my own soul and even more.'

'Once I take a soul on, I also take on their entire family as my spiritual children.'

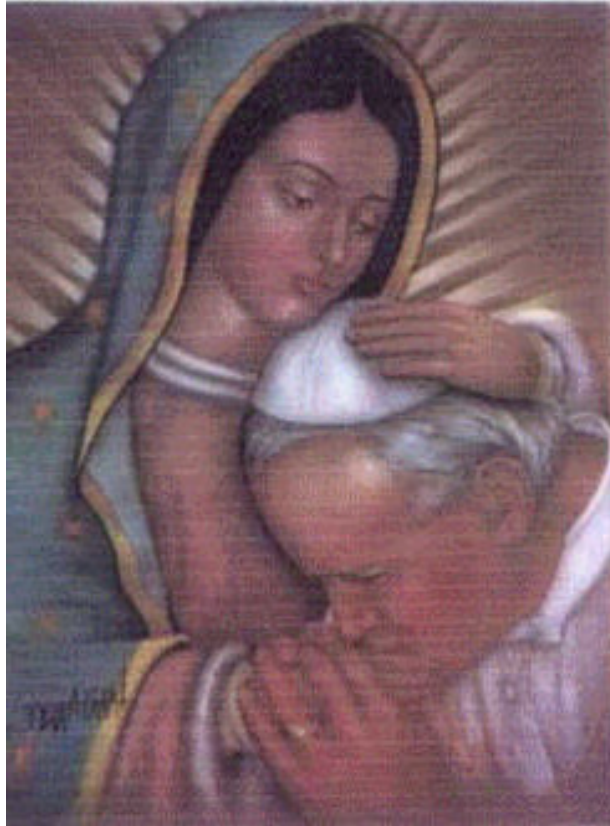
'To my Spiritual Children, my prayers for you will never be lacking.'
'If one of my spiritual children ever goes astray, I shall leave my flock and seek him out.'

Meditations by Padre Pio

Let us love Jesus for His divine greatness, for His power in Heaven and on earth, for His infinite merits; but also, and above all, be filled with gratitude. If He had not been so good towards us, but more severe, how

much less would we have sinned! ... But sin, when followed by the profound pain of having committed it, by the loyal resolution of never repeating it, by the sharp realization that its great evil prompted the mercy of God, when after the hardest fibers of our hearts have been cut, results in an outburst of tears full of remorse and love. The sin itself, my son, becomes a step which brings us closer, which raises us, which more securely leads us to Him.

**Image of
Venerable John Paul II
& the Virgin of Guadalupe**



Prayer for Peace

*Great and merciful God,
Lord of peace and life,
You have plans for peace, and not affliction.
You condemn wars
and defeat the pride of the violent.*

*You sent your Son Jesus
to preach peace to those near and far,
to gather people of every race
and nation into a single family.
Hear the single-hearted cry of all humanity:
no more war, a spiral of death and violence,*

*a threat against all your creatures
in heaven on the earth and in the sea.*

*In communion with Mary, the Mother of Jesus
once again we implore you:*

*R speak to the hearts of those responsible
for the fate of peoples,
stop the 'logic' of revenge and retaliation,
with your Spirit suggest new solutions,
generous and honorable gestures,
room for dialogue and patient waiting
which are more fruitful than
the hurried deadlines of war.*

John Paul II

About Icons.

An icon is not a painting in the sense we normally regard pieces of art, although it is an image that is painted. An icon is a window out of the obvious realities of everyday life into the realm of God. Every paint-stroke has a meaning hallowed by centuries of prayer. Icons are religious images that hover between two worlds, putting into colours and shapes what cannot be grasped by the intellect. Rendering the invisible visible. Icons are the visual equivalents of the Divine Scriptures. Not every religious painting can be considered an icon. Icons are religious pictures that convey inner spiritual meaning of their subject matter. The

Son of God came to restore the divine image in human form. Iconography is the graphic witness to this restoration.