



The Communion of Saints

I fondly remember a gift I received at Christmas, a watercolor of the outside of a house. Whenever I see the image, feelings of peace, joy, refuge, light, warmth, and home come to my mind and heart.

Throughout my life, the best part of the day, after having completed school, university, work, or routine chores, has been getting home. Knowing that I will be with the people I love the most, sharing food prepared with love, engaging in conversations of all kinds, but above all waiting with enthusiasm for the arrival of others, has always brought me joy.

In the Gospel of John, Chapter 14, Jesus says to his disciples: *"Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again to take you to myself, that where I am you may be also"*

This great promise of Our Lord, to receive us into His heavenly house where we will all have a place and enjoy being in His company, is our Christian goal.

In that beautiful mansion there are many rooms occupied by those who have preceded us. They enjoy the Glory of God and intercede in our behalf.

These are the Saints, who by Grace are united to the dead and risen Christ and participate in the mission in Heaven; this is the **Church Triumphant**.

Other members of the Church's family who have preceded us are being purified. These are the souls in purgatory, who undergo what is called the **Church suffering**.

These two groups are joined by those who still live as pilgrims in this world. We are **The Church Militant**.

All form in Christ one family, the Church, for the praise and glory of the Trinity, and make up the Communion of Saints

As part of the growth in the Faith and in the knowledge of our Holy Mother Church and motivated by the call to holiness to achieve Eternal Glory, the Missionaries of God's love have begun the task of better understanding the life of the Saints of the Church, as they are the best role models to follow.

Let us remember that we are all called to holiness, all in the situation of life we may be living: single, married, widowed, or religious. The best way to reach it is through a solid faith nourished by prayer and good works, with which through Grace our virtues are perfected.

The Catholic Church commemorates martyrs and saints in accordance with the procedures of canonization and beatification.

It is difficult to say precisely determine the total number of saints and blessed who are venerated in the Church. Some experts estimate that the Church has a total of 7 thousand. It fills us with joy and hope to know that all saints enjoy the eternal presence of God rather or not they appear in martyrologies.

Many blessed and saints are celebrated every day. Usually, these dates correspond to the death of each person, that is, of their entry into eternal life.

Ephesians 2:19

"So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with saints and members of the household of God"

Send us your questions
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Saint Anthony of Padua

Patron of the poor, travelers, masons, bakers, and papermakers

June 13



Symbols:

The most representative image of St. Anthony is that of a **young** friar who holds the **Child Jesus** and a **book** in his hand.

Youth refers to the ideal, pure, good character who welcomes everyone.

The Child Jesus evokes the vision he had in Camposampiero. It further expresses his attachment to the humanity of Christ and his intimacy with God.

The book, symbol of science, doctrine, preaching, and teaching, inspired by the book par excellence: the Bible.

Sacred orator, founder of brotherhoods and confraternities, theologian, and man of government, he left several treatises on mysticism and ascetics. All his sermons were published. He was proclaimed doctor of the Church in 1946.

His fame for performing miracle-works has not diminished and even today he is recognized as the greatest thaumaturgist of all time.

St. Francis of Assisi prayed that God would send his Franciscan family a servant that would have the gifts of teaching and theological knowledge to entrust him with the formation of the friars. St. Anthony was the answer to that prayer. Saint Anthony took charge of the theological formation of the order without forgetting the principles of humility and services.

St. Anthony was born in Lisbon on August 15, **1195**. He was the eldest son of Martin Bouillon, a Portuguese knight descended from French nobles, and Maria Tavera. His birth name was Fernando Martins.

His mother introduced her son to the teachings of the Gospel and devotion to the Queen of Heaven. At the age of five, and in front of an image of Mary, he took a vow of virginity in the presence of his parents.

Fernando studied in the Cathedral of Lisbon with clerics who helped him grow in virtue and science.

At the age of fifteen he left his home and entered the Augustinian community of Canons Regular of the Order of the Holy Cross at the Abbey of Saint Vincent on the outskirts of Lisbon. To avoid pressure from relatives and friends who opposed his vocation, he renounced the family inheritance.

In **1212** he entered the monastery of Santa Cruz de Coimbra, where he again would not find tranquility as the monastery was affected by a confrontation between King Alfonso II of Portugal and Pope Innocent III. Anthony's own Prior was excommunicated for supporting King Alfonso II.

In **1219** he met the small Franciscan community of Coimbra. Being attracted by their fraternal, evangelical, and humble way of life. He decided to enter the newly created Franciscan order and took the Franciscan habit in **1220**. He changed his name from Fernando to Antonio, inspired by the life of San Antonio Abad.

Inspired by the example of Franciscan martyrs he decided to travel the roads of Morocco, making his voice heard at the gates of mosques. He then fell ill; in prayer he understood that in God's eyes, it was not his task to complete. He was forced to leave the country.

He embarked a ship with the intention of returning to Portugal, but a storm took the ship to Sicily where he stayed with a Franciscan community. In June **1221** he and 3,000 other Franciscans attended the chapter of the order; there he met St. Francis of Assisi and decided not to return to Coimbra, instead putting himself at the service of Fray Gracian, provincial of Romagna in Italy.

Antonio was respected for being a great orator, vigorously attacking heresy and unbelief.

On June 13, **1231**, he fell ill and was taken to Padua, expiring approximately aged 36. Antonio is buried there, in the church of Santa Maria Mater Domini, his spiritual refuge in times of intense apostolic activity.

Pope Gregory IX quickly ratified his canonization and was proclaimed a saint on **May 30, 1232**, just 11 months after his death.

Information taken from the book

"Vida de San Antonio Padua" Printed by Servicios San Antonio, 1997 and Aciprensa