

St. Anthony of Padua

Feast Day: June 13

Born: 1195

:: Died: 1231



This very popular saint was born at Lisbon in Portugal in a wealthy family. He was baptized and named "Ferdinand." His parents wanted him to be a great nobleman but when Anthony grew up he wanted to become a priest.

He received an excellent education from the Augustinian friars and joined the order. When he was twenty-five, his life took an exciting turn. He heard about how some Franciscans - St. Bernard and his companions had been martyred by the Moors in Morocco for their faith in Jesus.



From then on, Ferdinand felt a strong desire to die for Christ and he joined the Franciscans. This order was very new. St. Francis himself was still alive.

Ferdinand took the name "Anthony." He went off to Africa to preach to the Moors but he soon became so sick that he had to return to Italy.

The other Franciscan friars had no idea how brilliant and talented Anthony was or of how much education he had received. He never spoke about himself. So the Franciscan superiors assigned him to a quiet friary in Italy. There he washed pots and pans without complaint.

One day, at a large gathering of priests, when the speaker failed to arrive, Anthony was forced to preach. He preached such a marvellous sermon that everyone who heard him was most impressed. From then on, until he died nine years later, St. Anthony preached all over Italy and France. He was so popular that people even closed their stores to go to hear him.



St. Anthony died at Arcella, near Padua, Italy, on June 13, 1231 when he was just thirty-six. After he died, people often prayed to St. Anthony in times of physical as well as spiritual needs and many miracles have taken place through the intercession of St. Anthony. That is why he is called the "wonder-worker."

The statue of St. Anthony shows him with Baby Jesus because Baby Jesus appeared to him. Other pictures show St. Anthony holding a bible. This is because he knew, loved and preached the Word of God so well. In fact, St. Anthony was so well educated especially in Sacred Scripture that Pope Pius XII proclaimed him the "Evangelical Doctor," or Doctor of Sacred Scripture.

Reflection: *"Actions speak louder than words; let your words teach and your actions speak."* - sermon by St. Anthony.