



St Martin de Porres

Feast Day November 3rd

Juan Martin de Porres Velazquez was born on December 9, 1579, in Lima, Peru, to a Spanish nobleman and a former black slave. His father abandoned his family after Martin's sister was born two years later. His mother provided for the family by taking in laundry. Martin grew up in poverty, but was able to get two years of school. He then was placed with a barber/surgeon to learn the medical arts.

At the age of 15 he asked for admission to the Dominican Convent of the Rosary in Lima and was received first as a servant boy, and as his duties grew he was promoted to chaplain. Martin entered the Dominican clergy in 1601, although it was quite unusual at the time for someone of mixed race to be received into the religious order.

Saint Martín de Porres is known for his social work and miraculous healing powers. He maintained an austere lifestyle, which included fasting and abstaining from meat. He was noted for his work on behalf of the poor, establishing an orphanage and a children's hospital.

He worked in the infirmary of his convent for 25 years, and performed many miracles of healing there. Among the many miracles also attributed to him were those of levitation, bilocation, miraculous knowledge, instantaneous cures, and an ability to communicate with animals.

By the time he died, on November 3rd, 1639, he had won the affection and respect of many of his fellow Dominicans as well as a host of people outside the priory. Word of his miracles had made him known as a saint throughout the region.

After De Porres died, the miracles and graces received when he was invoked multiplied in such profusion that his body was exhumed after 25 years, which was said to be found intact, and exhaling a fine fragrance. Pope Gregory XVI beatified Martin de Porres on 29 October 1837, and nearly 125 years later, Pope John XXIII canonized him in Rome on May 6, 1962. He is the patron saint of mixed-race people, barbers, innkeepers, public health workers, and all those seeking racial harmony.

Wikipedia, www.Biography.com