



St. Rose of Lima, Spanish Santa Rosa de Lima

Feast Day August 23 or 30

St. Rose of Lima was the first person born in the Western Hemisphere to be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church.

She was born Isabel Flores de Oliva on April 20 or 30, 1586, Lima, Peru. Born into a noble family, Rosa (the name by which she was always known), was drawn to penitential practices and a spiritual life at a young age. Her mother wanted her to marry and initially refused to allow her daughter to pursue religious life. To deter suitors, Rosa cut off her hair and blistered her skin with hot peppers.

The struggle between them lasted 10 years, during which time Rose made a perpetual vow of virginity, taking St. Catherine of Siena as her model. In 1606 her mother relented and allowed Rosa to become a Dominican of the Third Order, though her parents did not permit her to live in a convent. Instead, Rosa chose strict enclosure and contemplation and withdrew to the seclusion of a hut in the family garden, where she endured a life of severe austerity and asceticism. She regularly wore a crown of thorns, practiced fasting, slept only a few hours a night on a bed of potsherds, self-flagellated, and experienced numerous visions.

Though she was largely a recluse, Rosa was devoted to the sick and hungry in her community and often brought them to her hut to care for them. She was skilled in needlework and sold her fine lace and embroidery and the flowers that she grew in her garden to help her family and to raise funds for the poor.

Her funeral was an occasion of public honor, and many miracles were said to have occurred after her death. She died August 24, 1617 in Lima. St. Rose is the patroness of embroiderers, gardeners, florists, those who suffer ridicule for their piety, and people who suffer family problems.

She was beatified in 1668 by Pope Clement IX and declared patron of Lima. She was canonized April 12, 1671, by Pope Clement X, who proclaimed her patron saint of Peru, all of South America, the Indies, and the Philippines. Her feast day is August 23, (in some countries August 30).

Edited from Britannica.com and www.catholic.org