



Saint Frances Cabrini

1850-1917

Patroness of Immigrants

The youngest of thirteen children, Frances Cabrini was born on July 15, 1850 in a small village called S'ant Angelo Lodigiano near Milan, Italy. Inspired by the stories of missionaries, she made up her mind to join a religious order. Because of her frail health, she was not permitted to join the Daughters of the Sacred Heart. Undaunted, in 1880, with seven young women, Frances founded the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She was as resourceful as she was prayerful, finding people who would donate what she needed in money, time, labor and support. She persisted in her desire to serve as a missionary in China, but when she visited Rome to obtain permission from Pope Leo XIII, he told her: *"not to the East, but to the West,"* to America rather than to China as she had expected. She was to help the thousands of Italian immigrants already in the United States. In 1889, New York seemed to be filled with chaos and poverty, and into this new world stepped Mother Frances Cabrini and her sister companions. Cabrini organized catechism and education classes for the Italian immigrants and founded, established schools and orphanages despite tremendous odds.

Soon, requests for her to open schools came to Frances Cabrini from all over the world. She traveled to Europe, Central and South America and throughout the United States. She made 23 trans-Atlantic crossings and established 67 institutions: schools, hospitals and orphanages. Her activity was relentless until her death on December 22, 1917, in Chicago. In 1946, she was canonized by Pope Pius XII in recognition of her holiness and service to mankind. Saint Frances Cabrini was named Patroness of Immigrants in 1950.



Saint Frances Cabrini is imaged in the south rose window in the Cathedral of Saint Paul, exemplifying in her life: ***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice.*** One of the four cathedral bells is dedicated to her, Mother of Immigrants, with the words "I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

Today the Missionary Sisters, their lay collaborators and volunteers work as teachers, nurses, social workers, administrators and members of institutional boards of trustees. They can be found on six continents and 15 countries throughout the world – wherever there is a need.

South Rose window, Beatitude: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice."