

Saints: 1300 – 1499 (200 yrs.)

Saint Elizabeth of Portugal (1271-1325): Born in 1271, Queen Isabel married to King Diniz; dedicated her life to poor; established orphanages, provided shelter for homeless; founded convent in Coimbra. Had miracle when she was forbidden by her unfaithful husband to give to the poor. Having hid bread to give away in her apron; when she encountered the King, he asked her what she was carrying, she responded, *Roses*. The bread was transformed into roses; King did not understand how she could have fresh roses in January. He did not punish her. Known for settling disputes, Queen Isabel was called the Peacemaker. Many Portuguese and Portuguese-American organizations bear her name.

Saint Elizabeth of Portugal (1303-1373): Born in Sweden Received visions of Christ's suffering many times throughout her life; found the order of Most Holy Savior. Her father was governor and provincial judge of Uppland. Even as a child was greatly devoted to *Passion of Jesus*. Married at 14, had eight children, husband very devout, personal maid of Queen Blanche. Spoke with many royalty humbly explained what God wanted was for them to live better lives. When husband died, gave everything away to become poor nun. Traveled helping wherever she was called. Died in Rome July 23, 1373. *"True wisdom, then, consists in works, not in great talents, which the world admires; for the wise in the world's estimation . . . are the foolish who set at naught the will of God, and know not how to control their passions."* --Saint Bridget of Sweden.

Saint Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419): Dominican Friar who lived during the 14th century. He spent his time strengthening the Church through preaching, missionary work, teaching, and serving as a confessor and advisor. Vincent made many unsuccessful efforts to end the great schism through his apostolic ministry. However, his efforts took his missionary work to nearly every province of Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Flanders, England, Scotland, and Ireland. He is known as the patron saint of builders.

Saint Bernadine of Siena (1380-1444): Franciscan friar/preacher; "the Apostle of Italy" for his efforts to revive Catholic faith during the 15th century. Born in upper-class; lost mother and father between 3 & 7 yrs old; Aunt Diana raised him and taught him to seek consolation and security by trusting in God. Early in life had much concern for poor; fasted often, spent several yrs serving in hospital. During plague, took charge of hospital, lost many but recruited many to help. He was not affected by plague but became ill from fatigue. Eventually became *Franciscans of Strick Observance* w/focus on poverty and humility; called to continue St Vincent Ferrer's work. Excelled at mediating warring political factions; offered to be bishop x3 but refused, falsely accused of heresy and acquitted. His simple rule to live by: "In all your actions, seek in the first place the kingdom of God and his glory. Direct all you do purely to his honor. Persevere in brotherly charity, and practice first all that you desire to teach others."

Saint Frances of Rome (1384-1440): Born of noble Roman family; from early age felt drawn to religious life but forced to marry at age 13. Her sister-in-law felt same way. Two women worked together to help poor as well as raise their children. Plague took one child, she turned her home into a hospital and continue to go door to door to raise money. From this point on, the two women began to work to help the poor. Frances did not allow her charitable work to interfere with her family life, and bore three children. The plague left one of Frances' children dead and she turned her home into a hospital for the poor. She gave up all her wealth to the sick and poor and began to go door to door to raise money. She sought permission from Pope to form society of women to do this work following ideals of Benedictine order and carried on active charity and assistance of the poor. After setting up the foundation of this society, Frances continued to live with her husband until his death. After his death Frances lived the remainder of her life with the society that she formed. Frances died in 1440 and is the patron of widows and motorists.

Saint John of Capistrano (1386-1456): Patron saint of Jurists. Son of former German knight; lawyer in Naples; appointed governor of Perugia, was betrayed and imprisoned, when released entered Franciscan community, students of St Bernardine of Siena, instituted devotion to *Holy Name of Jesus and His Mother*; began his brilliant preaching apostolate of *penance* in 1420, he established many Franciscan communities. At age 70, was appointed by Pope Callistus III to lead a successful crusade of 80,000 people against invading Turks at battle of Belgrade in 1456. He died three months later.

St Rita of Cascia (1386-1456): Pope John Paul II called her “a disciple of the Crucified One” and an “expert in suffering.”; in Spain as the “*saint of the impossible*”. She embraced *suffering with charity* and *wrongs with forgiveness* in the many trials she experienced in her life: as a wife, widow, a mother surviving the death of her children, and a nun. Married at 12 to violent man for 18 yrs before he died. Entered convent after her children died, she lived life of prayer, mortification and service to people of Cascia. Last 15 yrs of her life, received stigmata-like thorn wound in answer to her prayers to be more profoundly conformed to the passion of the Lord Jesus. Rita was bedridden for the last four years of her life, consuming almost nothing except the Eucharist. She died of tuberculosis at age 70 on May 22, 1456; canonized in 1900 by Pope Leo XIII, patron saint of impossible causes, sterility, abuse victims, loneliness, marriage difficulties, parenthood, widows, the sick, bodily ills and wounds.

St Casimir (1458-1484): Prince of Poland, second son of 13 children of King Casimir IV and Elizabeth of Austria, his life was scheduled to cement his father's authority and increase Poland's power. Casimir realized from an early age that his life belonged to someone else, but to a much higher King than his father. Despite pressure, humiliation, and rejection, he stood by that loyalty through his whole life; committed to God from childhood. Some of that commitment was the result of a tutor, John Dlugosz, whose holiness encouraged Casimir on his own journey. It may be hard for us to imagine royal luxury as a pressure. But for Casimir, the riches around him were temptations to forget his true loyalties. Rebelling against the rich, fashionable clothes he was expected to enjoy, he wore the plainest of clothes. Rejecting even ordinary comforts, he slept little, spending his nights in prayer. And when he did sleep, he lay on the floor not on a royal bed. Even though he was a prince, many of those around him must have laughed and joked at his choices. Yet, in the face of any pressure, Casimir was always friendly and calm. Though his father must have wondered about him, he must have seen and admired Casimir's strength. He showed that he misunderstood this strength when he sent Casimir as head of an army to take over the throne of Hungary at the request of some nobles there. Casimir felt the whole expedition was wrong but was convinced to go out of obedience to his father. He could not help but feel at every step that it was disobedient to his other Father. So when soldiers started deserting, he was only too glad to listen to the advice of his officers and turn back home. His feelings were confirmed when he discovered that Pope Sixtus IV had opposed the move. His father, however, was furious at being deterred from his plans and banished Casimir to a castle in Dobzki, hoping that imprisonment would change Casimir's mind. Casimir's commitment to what he believed was right only grew stronger in his exile and he refused to cooperate with his father's plans any more despite the pressure to give in. He even rejected a marriage alliance his father tried to form. He participated in his true King's plans wholeheartedly by praying, studying, and helping the poor. He died at the age of 23 in 1484 from lung disease. He was buried with his favorite song, a Latin hymn to Mary called "Omni die dic Mariae" which we know as "Daily, Daily Sing to Mary." Because of his love for the song, it is known as the Hymn of St. Casimir though he didn't write it. **Casimir is patron saint of Poland and Lithuania.**