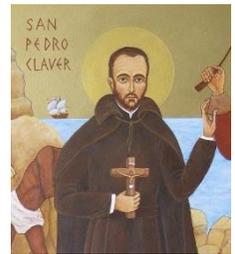
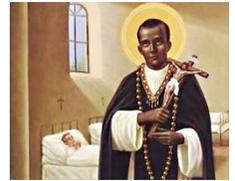
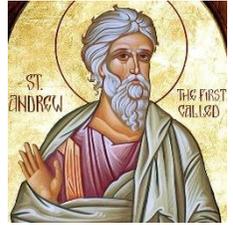
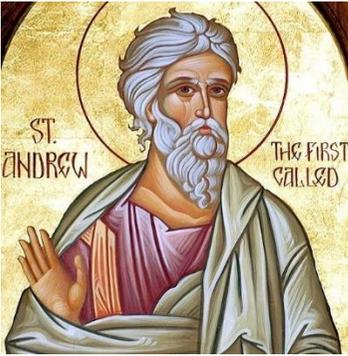


Our Active
Love Builds
the Kingdom
of God
Saint Profiles





Name: St Andrew

Feast Day: 30th November

Birthplace: Bethsaida, on the Sea of Galilee

Born: Early 1st Century

Died: Mid to late 1st Century (crucified in Patras)

Canonised: Apostle – known as a saint in the early church

Patron Saint of: Scotland, and many other countries; fishermen, ropemakers and performers.

The life of St. Andrew: Andrew was one of Jesus' twelve disciples. In John's Gospel, Andrew is described as being a disciple of John the Baptist, who brings his brother to Jesus. Andrew was a disciple with faith, who took people to Jesus. John 6:1-13 describes a time when a large crowd of people was following Jesus. Jesus asked Philip, a disciple, where they could buy bread for the people to eat. Philip answered, "It would take six months' wages to buy enough bread for each person to have a bite!" However, Andrew had noticed a boy with a packed lunch. Andrew spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus accepted the bread and fish, gave thanks, and distributed the food. Everyone had as much as they wanted, and there were twelve baskets of food left over. Church tradition teaches that St Andrew preached in many places in Eastern Europe, until finally being martyred in Patras, which is now in Greece. Early texts suggest that St Andrew was crucified on the same type of cross as Jesus: but a tradition developed that he was crucified on an X shaped cross, as he did not believe he should be crucified on the same cross as Jesus. This is why he is often shown with an X-shaped cross, and why the flag of Scotland has that white X on a blue background. In this Year of Faith, Andrew's example can inspire us. He was not overwhelmed when he saw the crowd and heard Jesus' request for food. Instead, he did the little he could, giving Jesus the opportunity to share and multiply the loaves and fish. Can I show the same faith in my life?

A thought to take away: Andrew brought other people to Jesus, and trusted Jesus in order to follow him. His action of bringing a boy with only five loaves and two fish resulted in many people being fed. If we take a small step in faith to try to address issues of hunger, who knows what the result will be?



Name: St. Martin de Porres

Feast Day: 3rd November

Birthplace: Lima, Peru

Born: 1579

Died: 3rd November 1639

Canonised: 1962 by Pope John XXIII

Patron Saint of: Those seeking inter-racial harmony; all who work for social justice.

The life of St. Martin: Martin was born in Lima, Peru, in 1579. His father was a Spanish nobleman and his mother was a freed slave from Panama. For a number of years, Martin's father left the family and ignored Martin because of his appearance – in looks, Martin was very like his mother, and his father found this difficult to accept.

The family was very poor, but despite all these difficulties, Martin grew up as good young man who prayed and tried to live out the teachings of Jesus. He was sent to learn the trade of a barber, which in those days included learning surgical and medical skills. Martin's father finally decided to take care of his son's education, but Martin wanted to join the Dominican Priory of the Rosary in Lima, as a brother.

He soon proved to be a wonderful friar, extraordinarily kind, humble and holy. Before long, he began to work miracles, curing so many people that everyone in Lima would send for Brother Martin when there was sickness.

Martin treated people of all races and colours, showing no discrimination. He recognised all people as his sisters and brothers in Christ. He founded an orphanage and was generous to sick people outside the priory. Many gave large amounts of money to Martin to help with these ventures. Even animals were looked after by this generous-hearted saint.

Martin had a very humble opinion of himself, calling himself "Brother Broom". When he died, this beloved saint was mourned by all. He was carried to his tomb by bishops and noblemen, who wanted to honour this humble and holy brother, whose life had been such an example to them all.

A thought to take away: We are all part of that great communion of saints, people throughout the world and in every century, whose lives witnessed to the love of God in this world, and who continue to be an example to us. Pope Benedict reminded us that we are all called to be saints. How am I going to be a witness for social justice? How am I going to love God and my neighbour? How can I live as a saint?



Name: St. Peter Claver

Feast Day: 9th September

Birthplace: Lleida, Catalonia

Born: 26th June 1580

Died: 8th September 1654

Canonised: 15th January 1888 by Pope Leo IX

Patron Saint of: Slaves, Colombia, Race relations, Ministry to African-Americans, Seafarers

The life of St. Peter: In 1610, St. Peter Claver arrived in the city of Cartagena (in modern day Columbia), where the slave trade flourished. The son of a wealthy Catalonian farmer, Claver entered the Jesuits at the age of 20 in 1601. Nine years later, with six years of formation still to go, he asked to serve in the Spanish missions. His superiors consented, permitting him to complete his studies in South America. Upon his arrival, Claver witnessed the grim plight of the Africans and vowed to dedicate his ministry to their care. Claver based his ministry primarily in Cartagena, where large ships, densely packed with slaves, arrived regularly in the harbour. The conditions of the slave ships were so horrific that an estimated one-third of the men and women aboard died in transit. Knowing this, Claver didn't wait for the slavers to unload their cargo. Instead, he boarded as soon as the ships docked, heading straight to the hold to give the Africans something to drink. After they had been moved to the slave market, he continued to move among them, distributing brandy and bread. As he cared for the slaves' bodily needs, Claver also cared for their spiritual needs. With the help of a translator, he assured them of their dignity and told them of a God who loved them, baptising all who asked for it. Then, in the months when few ships arrived in the port, he travelled to the plantations, meeting with those he'd baptized, giving further instruction in the Faith and advocating for their humane treatment. When he visited those plantations, he always insisted on staying in the slave quarters. By the time of St. Peter Claver's death, in 1654, it is estimated that he baptized more than 300,000 slaves and quenched the thirst of countless more.

A thought to take away: St. Peter reminded those that he ministered to that they had a dignity and a value and worth by simply offering them a cup of water and praying for them. How could you show others their value and worth?