

SAINT ROSE OF LIMA

LIFE

Isabel Flores de Oliva, who for her beauty particularly, received the name "Rose" and later added "of St. Mary", was born in Lima in 1586. During the colonial society in her time, there was a clear class distinction: wealthy families, small owners and a great majority of peasants - blacks and mulattoes, who were all treated as slaves. Rose's family belonged to the small landowners. Her parents strove to give her good education in addition to providing her with strong faith formation.

Lima has a pioneer community in evangelization: the convent of Santo Domingo, where lay people can participate in the liturgy, meet & meditate on the Word of God and be temporary collaborators in the missionary works or "doctrines".

Saint Rose of Lima lived in a personal dilemma: on one hand she felt her vocation as a contemplative religious and on the other she perceived the strong call to fulfill her vocation within her family, working for the Kingdom of God from outside the convent. And so, when she was 20 years of age, she found her way: to be poor for the universal fraternity by entering the lay movement of the Order of Preachers.

As a lay Dominican, she taught children how to play musical instruments (guitar, harp, zither), cultivated the home garden, and did works of sewing. In this way, she contributed to support her family, to bring them out of their economic crisis. In their home, they lived a simple yet content life.

She participated in the Eucharist at the Convent of Santo Domingo. Behind her house, she built a small cabin, in order to contemplate on the Gospels while praying; that is where she usually entered into communion with God, with men and with the nature. Only God could recompense her and she was known as a woman of "secret contemplation". To this, she united a series of self-mortifications. She explains in her writings that mortification, of the heart and soul, is necessary for it to be satiated by the Spirit of God, to be guided by the Holy Spirit, in order to renew the face of the earth starting from oneself. For her neighbors she was a sympathetic woman: she always excused the mistakes of others, forgave any insults, she insisted on bringing sinners back on track, she tirelessly helped the sick, She strived for mercy and compassion.

She herself wanted to leave Lima for her mission but various circumstances prevented her from doing so. On August 24, 1617, she died at the age of thirty-one in Lima. Her body was venerated at the Dominican Basilica of Santo Domingo in Lima. She was canonized by Pope Clement X on April 12, 1671. Since then, whole of South America and the Philippines venerated her as their patroness.

SPIRITUALITY

St. Rose of Lima was celebrated as the first flower of holiness in America, distinguished by the fragrance of her penance and prayer. Endowed with brilliant qualities and wit, as a child she consecrated herself to the Lord with a vow of virginity. She felt a deep veneration for Saint Catherine of Siena, with whom she shared an intimate connection, for this reason she decided, in 1606, to enroll herself with the Dominican Secular Order, to offer herself completely for evangelical perfection. Lover of solitude, she devoted much of her time to contemplation, also desiring to introduce others to the arcane of "secret prayer". She encouraged priests to draw everyone to the "love for praying".



Frequently secluded in the small hermitage constructed in the garden of her parents, she would open her soul to the missionary work of the Church with ardent devotion for the salvation of sinners and of indigenous people. For them, she wanted to give her life and she gave up herself to hard penances, to win them for Christ. For fifteen years she endured great spiritual dryness as a purifying crucible. She also stood out for her works of mercy towards the needy and oppressed.

St. Rose of Lima burned in love for "Jesus in the Eucharist" and in deep piety for his Mother, whose rosary she propagated with untiring fervor, believing that every Christian "must preach it with the word and have it engraved in his heart".

MODEL FOR YOUTH

- Woman of "secret contemplation".
- Searching and finding her way to holiness
- Lover of the Eucharist and of prayer
- Missionary concern for the poor and indigenous people
- Practicing the acts of mercy
- A professor and catechist

FIRST FLOWER OF HOLINESS IN AMERICA

- Lay consecrated to the Order of Santo Domingo
- South America and the Philippines venerate her as their patroness