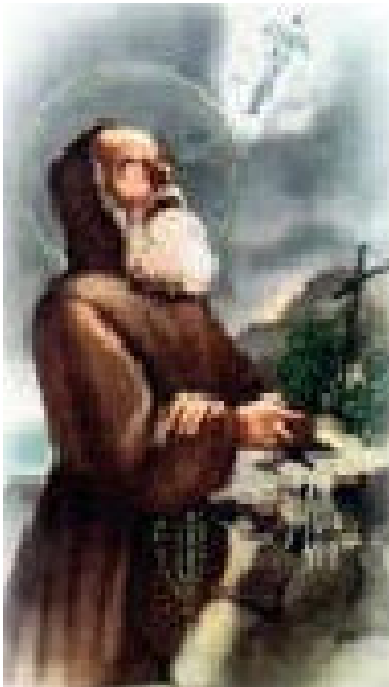


Lives  
of  
Saints

# St Francis of Paola

1416-1507

Feast day: 2nd April



"Fix your minds on the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ... He himself gave us an example of perfect patience and love. We, then, are to be patient in adversity."

**St Francis of Paola**

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I loved contemplative solitude and wished only to be "the least in the household of God". But, the Church called me to active service in the world and I did my very best to fulfill my vocation.

I accompanied my parents on a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi and went to live as a contemplative hermit in a remote cave on the seacoast, near Paola. Before I was 20, I received the first followers who had come to imitate my way of life. Seventeen years later, when my disciples had grown in number, I established a rule for my community and sought the approval of the Church. We called ourselves the Hermits of St Francis of Assisi. We were approved by the Holy See in 1474.

In 1492, I changed the name of my community to "Minims" because I wanted us to be known as the least (minimi) in the household of God. I wanted us to imitate Francis of Assisi's humility. I wanted us to observe the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, but also a perpetual Lenten fast. I believed that in order to grow spiritually we should mortify ourselves heroically.

It was my desire to be a contemplative hermit, yet I believed that God was calling me to the apostolic life. I began to use the gifts I had received to minister to the people of God. God used me to perform miracles and to prophesy. I defended the poor and the oppressed and I got into trouble because I admonished King Ferdinand of Naples who was King at the time. Towards the end of my life, I travelled to Paris to prepare the King Louis XI of France for his death, and for a while influenced the course of national politics.