DAILY COMPASS
Managing Director Riccardo Cascioli
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# Saint Rose of Lima

SAINT OF THE DAY 23_08_2021

“Listen, everyone. By Christ’s command, with his own words I warn you: we cannot obtain any grace if we do not accept the sufferings”. So wrote the first American to be canonized, Saint Rose of Lima (1586-1617), a mystic blessed with countless heavenly gifts who offered her whole life in oblation to God for the salvation of souls and the conversion of the peoples of the New World.

**The fourth of 13 children**, she was born to Spanish parents who had immigrated to

Peru and who had baptized her with the name of Isabella. It was a caring indigenous servant girl, struck by the beauty of the child, who called her Rose for the first time. And since then that name, among the protests of the saint who did not want to fall into vanity, was 'confirmed' in several circumstances. Without knowing her, the Spanish missionary Saint Toribio, who confirmed her, called her by this name. Later the Virgin said to her: "My divine Son approves of the name of Rose, but wants you to add mine. Therefore from now on you will be called Rose of Saint Mary".

**In fact, one cannot understand Rose's life without constant reference to the heavenly Mother**, whom she loved tenderly and imitated from childhood, receiving extraordinary graces in return. By the age of 10 she had already made a vow of perpetual virginity. Through reading she was also attracted by the example of a famous Dominican tertiary, Saint Catherine of Siena (1347-1380). She fasted three times a week and did hard penances in secret, eager to share Christ's sacrifice because she was convinced that "Love with love is paid". After wishing to join the Poor Clares, she understood that the Divine Will over her was another and on 10 August 1606 she donned the habit of the Dominican Third Order in a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary.

**With the help of a brother, she built a small cell at the end of her home garden**. There she spent her time, going out only for daily Mass and to assist in body and spirit children, the sick and the needy, Spanish and indigenous, for whom she had created a sort of shelter. At a certain point her days were spent as follows: 12 hours of prayer, 10 hours of manual labour, and only two hours of sleep. Her spiritual director ordered her to get more rest. She was the object of the devil's harassment. She also went through the test of the "dark night", common to the saints. But she accepted every trial with joy. From this she drew an immense capacity to love, according to the heart of Jesus and Mary, who gratified her with frequent visits and spiritual conversations. "If men knew what it is to live in grace, they would not be afraid of any suffering and would willingly suffer any pain, because grace is the fruit of patience".

**In 1615 the Dutch ships prepared to attack Lima**. Rose had other women gather in church to pray. And as soon as she heard of the Calvinists' landing, she embraced the tabernacle, wanting to protect the Blessed Sacrament from desecration. The Dutch withdrew a few days later due to the sudden death of their admiral: the liberation of the city was attributed to the intercession of Rose, considered a saint even then. Not everyone understood her fervour for God and souls, but she said, "The sweetness and happiness that the world can offer me are only a shadow of what I feel".

**On Palm Sunday 1617 the mystical wedding with Jesus took place**, a very rare privilege already granted to Saint Catherine. In that same year, now sick with tuberculosis, she experienced her very painful agony: "Nevertheless, in this, as in everything else, may the divine Will be done," she said at the hardest moment. In the early hours of August 24, Saint Bartholomew's Day, she went to meet her Bridegroom forever after exclaiming several times, "Jesus, be with me!". She was 31 years old. Clement X canonized her in 1671, proclaiming her patroness of the New World. In Peru she is celebrated on 30 August, a national holiday.

**Patroness of:** Americas, Philippines, West Indies, Peru; florists, gardeners, tuberculosis patients.