

## Saint Joseph of Cupertino

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SAINT OF THE DAY

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That the gift of infused science exists can be ascertained by reading about Saint Joseph of Cupertino (1603-1663), who yet called himself Brother Donkey. It was not false modesty, because he really had grown up as a “donkey”. As a child he left school early because of an illness that forced him to bed for five years, from which he recovered after being anointed with oil in a nearby sanctuary. Very devoted to Our Lady, he was drawn to the religious life, but two religious communities rejected him for ineptitude. In the end, more out of compassion than anything else, the Conventual Franciscan friars

accepted him.

**He did not lack good will, but he learned with difficulty.** At the examination for the diaconate, the bishop randomly opened the Bible on the passage "*Blessed is the womb that bore Thee*" (Lk 11:27). It was the only one Joseph knew well. Providence also helped him in the examination for admission to the priesthood and he understood that he owed everything to God. His humility and constant prayer attracted to him so many supernatural gifts that theologians began to ask him for advice.

**Even more than for his infused science, he became known for his levitations,** which he would have liked to conceal. But the reading of a psalm or the sight of a sacred image was enough to suspend him a few inches in the air and even fly. The crowds followed him and his fame became such that the Inquisition wanted to go deeper to understand if there was abuse of popular credulity: after he experienced an ecstasy before their eyes, the judges concluded that there was no trick.

**He was transferred from one convent to another (he also lived in Assisi),** but it was impossible for him to live in hiding because of the repeated supernatural phenomena, especially during Mass, the true fulcrum of his days. He said: "When the gunpowder ignites in the musket, it sends out that boom and roar. So is the ecstatic heart lit with the love of God!".

**Patron of:** astronauts, aviators, aeroplane passengers, students