

St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church
160 Court Street, Buffalo New York

The Life of St. Anthony of Padua

Anthony was born in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1195 to a rich and noble family. At baptism he received the name Ferdinand. Much to the disappointment of his parents, Ferdinand entered the order of St. Augustine's Regular Canons. It is to this order that he owes his intellectual formation.

When Ferdinand learned of the martyrdom in Morocco of five Franciscans (whom he had met a few months earlier), he took interest in St. Francis of Assisi and his movement, their life of poverty, their deep faith and their rejection of all compromise with the world. He decided to leave the monastic life and joined the Franciscans receiving the name Anthony. He continued his studies and became a priest at age 25. Shortly after, Anthony left for Africa as a missionary. Once in Morocco, he fell ill and had to be sent home. Shipwrecked on his return, Anthony found himself in the island of Sicily. After a brief period of convalescence, he made his way to Assisi where he met St. Francis who appointed him professor to the young Franciscans in Padua.

Here, the life of St. Anthony as a preacher began by chance. At the ordination of a priest, the Superior asked him out of the blue to give a sermon in which his exceptional knowledge of the Holy Scripture, deep-rooted faith and his admirable oratory showed forth immediately. Anthony was made an itinerant preacher and carried out his apostolic ministry throughout northern Italy and southern France.

Anthony had a great devotion to the Eucharist, to the Word of God, and to the Blessed Mother. He was a humble, poor and peaceful man, but had the courage to call the rich and the proud to conversion.

During Anthony was preaching his last Lenten mission near Padua, his long fasts and a whole life of sacrifice, took their toll on him. Anthony died of heart failure at age thirty-six on June 13, 1231. The following year he was recognized a saint, and in 1946 Pope Pius XII bestowed on him the title of Doctor of the Church.



The iconic image of Saint Anthony, with book of Scripture, Christ Child, and the lily of the Annunciation, rendered by [Guercino](#), 1656