



Born in Trier, Germany in 340, Ambrose was the son of the Roman Prefect of Gaul. At the death of his father, young Ambrose was brought back to Rome and excelled in his studies, becoming a noted lawyer, poet, and orator. In 372 he too entered civil service and was appointed as Governor of the territories of Liguria and Amelia by the Emperor Valentinian, and made his home in Milan. He fulfilled this position with dedication and justice.

In 374, passions ran high among feuding factions of Christians in the city of Milan over who would replace the recently deceased bishop. When Ambrose, the governor, entered the cathedral of Milan to try and bring calm to mobs, he asked them to remember their faith and unity. The mobs were so impressed by his sincerity and respect for the Church, they unanimously called for Ambrose to be made their new bishop. Ambrose was only 35 years old when he was unexpectedly chosen to be bishop of Milano. In an unfortunate custom of the day, Ambrose was not yet baptized, although he was well educated in the faith. Therefore he was baptized, confirmed, ordained a priest, and then a bishop all within one week.

His life as a bishop was exemplary: a life of prayer and simplicity, hard work, study, and extraordinary patience. He likewise oversaw the spiritual and material administration of a large diocese. The people loved him for both his zeal and accessibility. He was a great reformer of the church, promoter of the priesthood and the consecrated life, a spiritual director, author of books on the faith, and was recognized as one of the most eloquent preacher of his day.

Ambrose preaching and writing produced many converts, including St. Augustine. After almost a year of one on one discussion about the faith, Ambrose baptized Augustine at the Easter Vigil in 387.

Ambrose died at the age of 57 on April 4, 397. He was buried on Easter Sunday of that year, in a basilica he had founded in Milan, which was later renamed in his honor. Due to his profound writings, sermons, and scripture commentaries, he was named a Doctor of the Church and regarded as one of the great figures of Church History. His feast day is celebrated on December 7th.

Today, he lives on within the Communion of Saints, intimately connected to us through the Mystical Body of Christ. Let us ask him to intercede for all the concerns of our parish community so blessed to call him our patron!