

Saint Alphonsus, Life and Attributes

Hello. I am a Doctor of the Church. This is a title given to a few people of eminent learning, with a high degree of sanctity, and by proclamation by the Church. Let me tell you about myself. I was born in Italy and baptized as Alphonsus Mary Anthony John Cosmas Damian Michael Gaspard de' Liguori, but you can call me Saint Alphonsus Liguori. I was the oldest of seven children and very good with music, art, and books. I was tutored at home before entering the University and then graduating as a lawyer at the age of 16. People laughed because my graduation gown almost buried me. I was a very good lawyer, too. I didn't lose one case in the eight years before my last case which I lost, simply because I read something wrong. I spent several days in prayer after that and also helped at the hospital for "incurables", which I was in the habit of doing. While there, I found myself surrounded by a mysterious light and heard a voice say, "Leave the world and give yourself to me." I went to the church immediately, laid my sword before the statue of Our Lady, abandoned my inheritance and chose to become a priest.

I became a preacher, a confessor, a missionary, an artist, a musician, a writer, and the founder of an order, called the Redemptorists, who serve the poor and later promote the Our Lady of Perpetual Help icon, like the icon hanging behind the altar at the Cathedral. I truly enjoyed preaching the love of God in a humble manner. One time I became so exasperated with a preacher's grand, flowery language that I moved him out of the pulpit and finished the sermon myself.

My love for Jesus is expressed in four great devotions

- The Nativity, when Jesus was born...
- Mary, His mother...
- The passion and death of our Lord...
- ...and the Eucharist.

Who has heard of the song "Away in a Manger"? What was song written about (*Jesus being born, the incarnation...*)? That is a very well-known song about the incarnation of the Son of God, the birth of Jesus. I did not write that song, but I composed many popular songs with lyrics that would turn one's mind and heart to God, which I taught during missions. One song that I wrote that is very popular in Italy at Christmas time is called (in English) *You Come Down from the Stars*. (*Tu Scendi Delle Stelle*). In fact it is sung at the Vatican at the end of Christmas Eve Mass.

Among the paintings I have created are a beautiful portrait of Mary and a brutalized image of Jesus suffering on the cross. You may have used a method for meditating on the stations which I wrote, because they are still used and available today. Although I wrote 111 works on many different topics, I didn't start writing books until I was in my 50s. Some of those books have been translated into 60 different languages. During the time I lived, those from the

Janesists sect were making many faithful people feel unworthy to receive the Body of Christ. So I wrote my first book called "*31 visits to the Blessed Sacrament*", with one visit for each day of the month, because one should not totally avoid the Blessed Sacrament, even if one is not worthy of communion. After all, at the Last Supper Jesus fulfilled his promise not to leave us by transforming bread and wine into himself.

For my visit the first day of the month, I wrote:

Quote "A Spanish Poor Clare loved to make long visits to the Blessed Sacrament. The other nuns asked what she did during those long silent hours. "I could kneel there forever," she answered. "And why not? God is there. You wonder what I do in the presence of my God? I marvel, I love, I thank, I beg. What does a tramp do when he meets a millionaire? A sick man when he sees a doctor? A starving man when he sees food? What does a dry-throated hiker do at a drinking fountain?" Unquote

I am overwhelmed with gratitude and desperate that everyone should develop a deep reverence and love for the gift of the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Jesus. For those who feel unworthy to receive communion, I also wrote a short prayer called my...

"Spiritual Communion."

My Jesus, I believe you are really here in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you more than anything in the world, and I hunger to feed on your body. But since I cannot receive Communion at this moment, feed my soul at least spiritually. I unite myself to you now as I do when I actually receive you. Never let me be parted from you.

<http://www.redemptorists.co.uk/news/news-items/180-the-eucharist-and-saint-alphonsus.html>

I have spent many hours in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and I even witnessed a

Eucharistic miracle in Scala, Spain. Several nuns, Bishop Santoro, and other people were able to witness it, too, because it happened on Thursdays over three consecutive months, beginning in September 1732. What happened during the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the monastery was the appearance of the signs of the Passion of Christ in the host displayed in the monstrance.

This is not the only miracle to take place in Scala. Almost 700 years before this, in the year 1050, Saint Peter Damian recorded this Eucharistic event. A priest noticed a woman had wrapped a consecrated host in a linen handkerchief to take it home and use for sorcery. The priest ran after her and took the Host she had sacrilegiously stolen. He opened the cloth and found that while half of the host looked normal, the other half had become visibly the Body of Christ highlighting the reality of the sacramental transubstantiation taking place at the Consecration.

http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/mir/english_pdf/Damian-Scala.pdf)

There have been many Eucharistic Miracles. I encourage you to research some, but more importantly, I encourage you to take time to visit the Blessed Sacrament. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament have given me strength through many challenges, like my gradually losing my sight and my hearing and having severe arthritis. "Those who pray are certainly saved; those who do not pray are certainly damned."

*CCC 2744 Saint Alphonsus Liguori, Del gran mezzo della preghiera
(A different interpretation said it this way. "The person who prays is saved; the person who does not pray is lost." (Saint Alphonsus)*