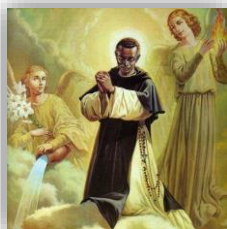


# St. Martin de Porres

**Feast Day:** November 3

**Patron Saint:** People of mixed race, African Americans, innkeepers, barbers, hairdressers, public health workers, Race Relations, Radio, Social Justice



**Juan Martín de Porres Velázquez** was born in the city of Lima, Peru, on 9 December 1579. He was the illegitimate son of a Spanish nobleman, Don Juan de Porres, and Ana Velázquez, a freed slave of African and Native descent.<sup>[1][2]</sup> He had a sister named Juana de Porres, born two years later in 1581. After the birth of his sister, the father abandoned the family.<sup>[3]</sup> Ana Velázquez supported her children by taking in laundry.<sup>[4]</sup> He grew up in poverty and, when his mother could not support him, Martin was sent to a primary school for two years, and then placed with a barber/surgeon to learn the medical arts.<sup>[2]</sup> He spent hours of the night in prayer, a practice which increased as he grew older.

Under Peruvian law, descendants of Africans and Native Americans were barred from becoming full members of religious orders. The only route open to Martin was to ask the Dominicans of **Holy Rosary Priory in Lima** to accept him as a "donado", a volunteer who performed menial tasks in the monastery in return for the privilege of wearing the habit and living with the religious community.<sup>[5]</sup> At the age of 15 he asked for admission to the Dominican Convent of the Rosary in Lima and was received first as a servant boy, and as his duties grew he was promoted to almoner (distributor of alms).

Martin continued to practice his old trades of barbering and healing and was said to have performed many miraculous cures. He also took on kitchen work, laundry, and cleaning. After eight years at Holy Rosary, the prior Juan de Lorenzana decided to turn a blind eye to the law and permit Martin to take his vows as a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic. Holy Rosary was

home to 300 men, not all of whom accepted the decision of De Lorenzana: one of the novices called Martin a "mulatto dog", while one of the priests mocked him for being illegitimate and descended from slaves.<sup>[5]</sup>

When Martin was 24, he was allowed to profess religious vows as a Dominican lay brother in 1603. He is said to have several times refused this elevation in status, which may have come about due to his father's intervention, and he never became a priest.<sup>[1]</sup> It is said that when his convent was in debt, he implored them: "I am only a poor mulatto, sell me." Martin was deeply attached to the Blessed Sacrament, and he was praying in front of it one night when the step of the altar he was kneeling on caught fire. Throughout all the confusion and chaos that followed, he remained where he was, unaware of what was happening around him.<sup>[6]</sup>

When Martin was 34, after he had been given the religious habit of a lay brother, he was assigned to the infirmary, where he was placed in charge and would remain in service until his death at the age of 59. He was known for his care of the sick.<sup>[2]</sup> His superiors saw in him the virtues necessary to exercise unflinching patience in this difficult role. It was not long before miracles were attributed to him. Martin also cared for the sick outside his convent, often bringing them healing with only a simple glass of water. He ministered without distinction to Spanish nobles and to slaves recently brought from Africa.<sup>[1]</sup> One day an aged beggar, covered with ulcers and almost naked, stretched out his hand, and Martin took him to his own bed. One of his brethren reproved him. Martin replied: "*Compassion, my dear Brother, is preferable to cleanliness.*"

When an epidemic struck Lima, there were in this single Convent of the Rosary 60 friars who were sick, many of them novices in a distant and locked section of the convent, separated from the professed. Martin is said to have passed through the locked doors to care for them, a phenomenon which was reported in the residence more than once. The professed, too, saw him suddenly beside them without the doors having been opened. Martin continued to transport the sick to the convent until the provincial superior, alarmed by the contagion threatening the friars, forbade him to continue to do so. His sister, who lived in the country, offered her house to lodge those whom the residence of the religious could not hold. One day he found on the street a poor Indian, bleeding to death from a dagger wound, and took him to his own room until

he could transport him to his sister's hospice. The prior, when he heard of this, reprimanded him for disobedience. He was extremely edified, however, by his reply: "*Forgive my error, and please instruct me, for I did not know that the precept of obedience took precedence over that of charity.*"<sup>[7]</sup> The prior gave him liberty thereafter to follow his inspirations in the exercise of mercy.

Martin did not eat meat. He begged for alms to procure necessities the convent could not provide.<sup>[7]</sup> In normal times, Martin succeeded with his alms to feed 160 poor persons every day, and distributed a remarkable sum of money every week to the indigent. Side by side with his daily work in the kitchen, laundry and infirmary, Martin's life is said to have reflected extraordinary gifts: ecstasies that lifted him into the air, light filling the room where he prayed, bilocation, miraculous knowledge, instantaneous cures and a remarkable rapport with animals.<sup>[3]</sup> He founded a residence for orphans and abandoned children in the city of Lima.<sup>[3]</sup>

Martin was a friend of both St. Juan Macías, a fellow Dominican lay brother, and St. Rose of Lima, a lay Dominican. By the time he died, on 3 November 1639, he had won the affection and respect of many of his fellow Dingos as well as a host of people outside the priory.<sup>[5]</sup> Word of his miracles had made him known as a saint throughout the region. As his body was displayed to allow the people of the city to pay their respects, each person snipped a tiny piece of his habit to keep as a relic. It is said that three habits were taken from the body. His body was then interred in the grounds of the monastery.

After De Porres died, the miracles and graces received when he was invoked multiplied in such profusion that his body was exhumed after 25 years and said to be found intact, and exhaling a fine fragrance. Letters to Rome pleaded for his beatification; the decree affirming the heroism of his virtues was issued in 1763 by Pope Clement XIII.

Pope Gregory XVI beatified Martin de Porres on 29 October 1837, and nearly 125 years later, Pope John XXIII canonized him in Rome on 6 May 1962.<sup>[8]</sup>

Martin de Porres is often depicted as a young mixed-race friar wearing the old habit of the Dominican lay brother, a black scapular and capuce, along with a broom, since he considered all work to be sacred no matter how menial. He is sometimes shown with a dog, a cat and a mouse eating in peace from the same dish.

[https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=306](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=306)

## Chaplet of St Martin de Porres

(Begin on the Medal)

(Modified from a Novena taken from <http://thethreepayers.blogspot.com/p/blog-page.html>)

*The Chaplet will have 9 pendant beads, and 3 beads after each Pendant. (Only one Hail Mary for the chaplet)*

Most humble Martin de Porres, your burning charity embraced not only the poor and needy but even the animals of the field. For your splendid example of charity, we honor you and invoke your help. From your place in heaven, hear the requests of your needy brethren, so that, by imitating your virtues we may live contentedly in that state in which God has placed us. And carrying our cross with strength and courage, may we follow in the footsteps of our blessed Redeemer and his most sorrowful mother, so that at last we may reach the kingdom of heaven through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### First Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Humility

St Martin imitated our Lord Who was meek and humble of heart. There was no pride or vanity in Martin, who realized that God is our Creator and that we are His creatures. Martin understood that God loves us as children and only wants us to be happy. So he had the wisdom to surrender entirely to the holy will of God. Let us imitate St Martin by humbly doing the will of God in all things.

*Prayer:* St Martin, ask our Lord and his Blessed Mother to give us the grace of true humility that we may not become proud, but may be contented with the gifts that God gives us. Obtain for us the light of the Holy Spirit that we may understand, as you did that pride is an obstacle to union with God, and that true happiness comes only from doing the will of God. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be.  
St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

### Second Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Love of God

St Martin was entirely filled with the fire of God's love. He knew that God sent His Son into the world to suffer and die on the cross for our sins. This thought stirred Martin's heart with deep affection for so loving a Redeemer, and his whole life gave evidence of his sincere gratitude. May we, too, learn to love our Saviour more and more and show our love by our good works.

*Prayer:* St Martin, why are our hearts so cold and lacking in love for the Son of God, who became a little child for our salvation? Why are we so slow to love Jesus, who loved us so much that he gave his life for us? Ask God and Our Lady of Sorrows to make us realize that the only way to happiness is by loving and serving God with our whole heart and soul. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be.  
St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

### Third Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Love for the Poor

St Martin was called "The Father of the Poor." He saw the poor, the sick, and the dying as children of God, and he helped them in a thousand practical ways. He studied medicine that he might know how to cure the sick. Every day he distributed alms to the poor. He built an orphanage for children. Let us imitate the charity of St Martin, that God may bless us as He blessed him.

*Prayer:* St Martin, teach us to be generous with the gifts that God has given us. Make us sympathetic toward those who are suffering and afflicted. Pray to our Redeemer and to Our Lady of Mercy that we may always be kind and generous to our neighbours because they are the children of our heavenly Father. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be.  
St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

### Fourth Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Faith

St Martin had a lively faith in all the teachings of the Catholic Church. He knew the Church was founded by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who came to teach us the way to the Father. God rewarded St Martin's humble faith by enlightening his mind so that he could understand the mysteries of our holy religion. May God give us the grace always to believe the truths which he has revealed.

*Prayer:* O St Martin, we need strong faith in God and His holy Church, especially in these days when religion is often considered unimportant. Bring all people to a knowledge and love of the true Church, that they may find the way of salvation and happiness. Ask Christ and Our Lady of Good Counsel to make us faithful disciples of Jesus Christ in life and in death. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be.  
St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

### Fifth Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Confidence in God

St Martin put all his trust in the goodness and promises of God. He hoped to obtain an eternal reward, through the grace of God and the merits of Jesus Christ. We know that St Martin's trust in God was not in vain. We, too, are confident that God will forgive us our sins if we are truly sorry, and that he will give us everlasting life if we serve Him faithfully, by obeying His commandments.

*Prayer:* St Martin, help us to have a great confidence in almighty God. Make us understand that He is one friend Who will never desert us. Keep us from foolishly presuming that we will be saved without doing our part, but keep us also from despair, which forgets the mercy of God. Ask Jesus and His Mother to increase in our hearts faith, hope and charity. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be.  
St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

**Sixth Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Devotion to Prayer**

St Martin kept his mind and heart always lifted up to the Creator of all things. His prayer came from the depths of his being, not just from his lips. He naturally turned to praise and thank God, and to ask Him for help. St Martin prayed with humility and perseverance, and God answered his prayers in miraculous ways. Martin will pray for us before the throne of God in heaven.

*Prayer:* St Martin, help us to have great faith in Christ's promise: "Ask and it will be given you; search and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you" (Mt 7:7). Make us faithful in participating in Holy Mass and in devoting time to personal prayer every day, to obtain the blessings of God. Ask the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary to intercede for us too. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be. St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

**Seventh Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Spirit of Penance**

St Martin was a hard worker who dedicated all his energies to his ministry. He did not seek an easy comfortable life. Even though he laboured so hard, he also imposed on himself severe penances for his sins and the salvation of others. If so holy a man did penances, how much more should we, who have seriously offended God by our sins!

*Prayer:* St Martin, from you we learn how to be dedicated and unselfish. You teach us to avoid idleness and self-seeking. Give us some of that spirit of penance which you had, so that we may be constant in the struggle with temptation. Ask Jesus crucified and Mary, the Queen of Martyrs, to give us the grace to fight the good fight. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be. St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

**Eighth Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Reward**

St Martin died a holy and peaceful death. He had spent his life doing good as a humble brother of the Dominican Order. But whoever humbles himself shall be exalted. Soon his heroic life became known all over the world, and on 6 May 1962 Pope John XXIII solemnly proclaimed him St Martin de Porres. Let us rejoice that we have such a powerful intercessor among the saints of God!

*Prayer:* St Martin, you have been raised up by God to show us the way to our true home. You have given us the good example and the encouragement that we need. We now realize from your life that all we have to do to win the reward of glory is to love and serve the best of Masters. May we ever be humble that we, too, may be exalted unto everlasting life. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be. St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

**Ninth Day/Pendant Bead - St Martin's Miracles**

St Martin performed many miracles during his life and after his holy death. We can go to him with confidence for he will obtain our petitions if they are for our true welfare. His great heart loves to help us in every way. We have only to tell him our troubles and to ask him to help us. If we do our part, we can be sure that our friend St Martin will do his part.

*Prayer:* Lord Jesus Christ, Who inflamed the heart of St Martin with an ardent love of the poor and who taught him the wisdom of always surrendering to God's holy will, grant that, like him, we may be ever truly humble of heart and full of Christ-like charity for suffering humanity. Amen.

*Recite one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be. St Martin de Porres, pray for us.*

**Closing Prayer: (centerpiece or Medal)**

To you Saint Martin de Porres we prayerfully lift up our hearts filled with serene confidence and devotion. Mindful of your unbounded and helpful charity to all levels of society and also of your meekness and humility of heart, we offer our petitions to you (state intentions).

Pour out upon our families the precious gifts of your solicitous and generous intercession; show to the people of every race and every color the paths of unity and of justice; implore from our Father in heaven the coming of His kingdom, so that through mutual benevolence in God men may increase the fruits of grace and merit the rewards of eternal life. Amen.

(<https://www.daily-prayers.org/angels-and-saints/prayers-to-saint-martin-de-porres/>)

