

Patron Saint: Philosophers & Lecturers

Justin was a philosopher in the Greek tradition, born around 100 A.D. in Samaria to Greek parents. As a youth, he was well educated

and very interested in Greek philosophy. He possessed an insatiable desire to learn the truth, wherever he could find it. This led him to study the works of his famous Greek ancestors – Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. He also tells us that he held several conversations with an elderly Christian person down by the lake side. There he learned of Jesus and many of the Old Testament people of faith, especially Abraham.

It was reported that St. Justin had a deep admiration for the martyrs. He was fascinated that they believed in a person and a cause so much that they were willing to die rather than deny. At the age of thirty-three, after years of studying the various systems of philosophy, he became converted to Christianity by way of Platonism.

Thereafter, his whole life was devoted to the propagation and defense of the Faith in Asia Minor and at Rome. He wrapped himself in the white, toga-style cloak of a Greek philosopher even after his conversion, seeking to reconcile faith and reason.

He is the most well-known apologist of the second century, the only true Christian thinker known between the time of Saint John the Evangelist and Origen in the first half of the third century. Justin mercilessly criticized the intellectual dead end of the ancient paganism in which he was raised, seeing it as not merely neutral but as an obstacle to discovering the truth. His teaching ministry took him first to Ephesus (c. 132), where he held a disputation with Trypho, a Jew, about the true interpretation of Scripture. The Dialogue with Trypho teaches three main points: the Old Covenant is passing away to make place for the New; the Logos is the God of the Old Testament; and the Gentiles are the new Israel.

Justin loved the idea that Christ the Logos was the same in substance but different in person from the Father. Theological truth expressed in the concepts of Greek philosophy was very satisfying to him, because it was very true. Justin also provided some of the very first words on the Holy Eucharist outside of the New Testament itself:

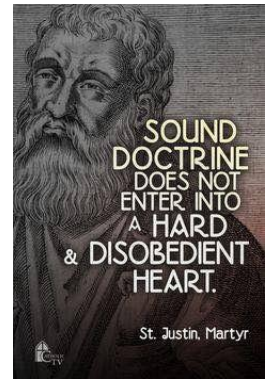
“And this food is called among us the Eucharist...we (have) been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.”

What a clear and remarkable testament to Christianity’s early belief in the Eucharist!

Justin moved to Rome to teach philosophy, founded a Christian school, and wrote two bold apologies (i.e., defenses—from the Greek apologia). Justin’s First Apology, addressed to Emperor Antoninus Pius, was published in 155 and attempted to explain the faith. Christianity was not a threat to the state, he asserted, and should be treated as a legal religion. He wrote "on behalf of men of every nation who are unjustly hated and reviled."

However, this apology has gained the most attention for modern readers because in it Justin records detailed descriptions of early Christian worship (to show unbelievers that Christianity was not subversive). The most famous passage is this:

On the day called Sunday there is a gathering together in the same place of all who live in a given city or rural district. The memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits. Then when the reader ceases, the president in a discourse admonishes and urges the imitation of these good things. Next we all rise together and send up prayers.



When we cease from our prayer, bread is presented and wine and water. The president in the same manner sends up prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people sing out their assent, saying the 'Amen.' A distribution and participation of the elements for which thanks have been given is made to each person, and to those who are not present they are sent by the deacons.

Those who have means and are willing, each according to his own choice, gives what he wills, and what is collected is deposited with the president. He provides for the orphans and widows, those who are in need on account of sickness or some other cause, those who are in bonds, strangers who are sojourning, and in a word he becomes the protector of all who are in need.

But even a thoughtful intellectual was not immune from persecution for being a Christian. Sometime between 162 and 168 A.D., most likely at the instigation of a cynic philosopher whom he had outshone in a public debate, Justin and six companions were called to answer for their beliefs before the Prefect, Rusticus of Rome. The

record of the trial has been preserved and shows the Prefect demanding that Justin sacrifice to the gods of Rome. Justin and his friends refuse and are threatened with torture and death. They respond: "Do as you wish; for we are Christians, and we do not sacrifice to idols." They sternly refused to be idolaters. They were duly led away, scourged, and beheaded.

<https://mycatholic.life/saints/saints-of-the-liturgical-year/june-1-saint-justin-martyr-memorial/>

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/evangelistsandapologists/justin-martyr.html>

<https://stjustin.org/our-patron/>

Praying the Chaplet of St. Justin Martyr

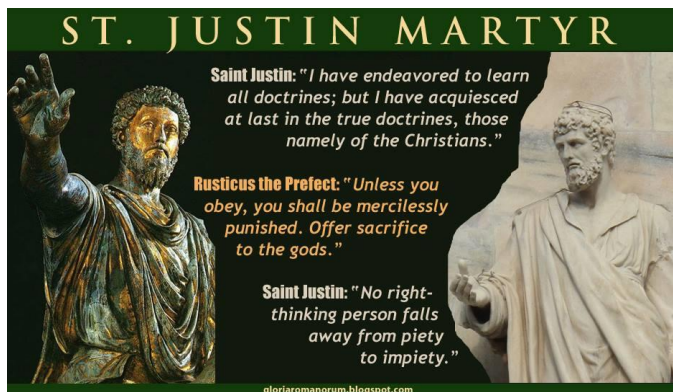
(Decade Rosary Format)

Opening Prayer (On the Crucifix): O God, who through the Cross wondrously taught Saint Justin your Martyr the surpassing knowledge and lofty wisdom of Jesus Christ, grant us, through his intercession, that we may reject deception and error, we may become steadfast in the faith. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Our Father

10 Hail Mary's

Closing Prayer (On the Medal): Saint Justin, you surrendered your life rather than worship an idol. Your refusal to abjure your faith gives an example to all Christian intellectuals and teachers that the deepest truths are not found only on a page but must be lived, and sacrificed for, even unto death. Saint Justin Martyr, pray that in our search for the Truth, God will open the gates of light for us the way God did for you and give us the wisdom no human being can give. Amen.



Opening Prayer:

<https://prayers4reparation.wordpress.com/2012/05/25/prayer-to-st-justin-for-steadfastness-in-the-faith/>

Closing Prayer:

<https://mycatholic.life/saints/saints-of-the-liturgical-year/june-1-saint-justin-martyr-memorial/>

https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=74