

Saint Martin of Tours
(Bishop)
11 November



About Saint Martin of Tours (c.316 - 397)

Saint Martin was born in the Roman province of Pannonia (what is today the western half of modern Hungary) in about the year 316, and was educated in Pavia, Italy. He was a catechumen who spent time in military service. However, he felt in conscience he could no longer continue in the army and so he was baptized at the age of eighteen and left the army. For a period of time he was a hermit on an island of the Ligurian coast, and then worked to establish monasticism in the West. He later founded a monastery at Ligugé in western France, where he lived a monastic life guided by St Hilary.

Later he was ordained a priest and became the Bishop of Tours (in France). He held that See for twenty-five years.

He founded other monasteries, educated the clergy, and preached the Gospel to the poor. He died in the year 397.

What can we learn from Saint Martin of Tour's life?

In his actions he gave an example of what a good shepherd should be, for he is widely known and remembered for his outstanding generosity to the poor, for arguing against the persecution of heretics, and for his active evangelization and pastoral care of rural areas.

The famous story about St Martin is that while a soldier in Amiens he gave half of his military cloak to a freezing beggar. Saint Martin later had a dream in which Christ revealed Himself as the **beggar. It was this episode that changed Saint Martin's life and the direction he took.** For from here on, he chose to be baptized and declared himself a soldier of peace for Christ, thereby refusing to participate in any act of violence.

Violence rarely solves any problems – it usually exacerbates them. Saint Martin truly was Christ for others in all that he did. We are called to help the poor and needy in various ways. It is really not what we do so much that matters, but rather that we actively respond to a need of a brother or sister of ours, because we follow Christ and that person in need is a brother or sister in the Lord **Jesus. In this way, the Gospel reading chosen for today's feast will have a more positive meaning** for us and should create an attitude of proactiveness in us, rather than reactiveness.

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Collect

O God, who are glorified in the Bishop Saint Martin
both by his life and death,
make new, we pray,
the wonders of your grace in our hearts,
that neither death nor life
may separate us from your love.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 25:31-40

I was naked and you clothed me; sick, and you visited me

Jesus said to his disciples:

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory,

escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory.

All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another
as the shepherd separates sheep from goats.

He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left.

'Then the King will say to those on his right hand,

"Come, you whom my Father has blessed,

take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink;

I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me,
in prison and you came to see me."

**Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you;
or thirsty and give you drink?**

**When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you;
sick or in prison and go to see you?"**

**And the King will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these
brothers of mine, you did it to me."**

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Antiphon

I am the Resurrection and the Life, says the Lord.
Whoever believes in me, even though he dies, will live,
and everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever.

Hymn for the Memorial of Saint Martin of Tours

Saint Martin of Tours you once were
a soldier for Christ and of peace,
for you knew violence would not
ever cause a conflict to cease.

While serving in the military (3 syllables)
with one who froze you shared your cloak.
In this vision Christ was revealed
and your wrong ways you did revoke.

You saw the face of Christ in those
who lacked the daily needs of life,
sharing with them what God gave you,
shielding them from harm and from strife.

Disciples of Christ may we be
now in this time and in this place,
sharing what the Lord gave to us
our own selfishness to displace.

For when we serve one in our midst
it is you Lord, whom we will meet.
Give us the courage to reflect
your glorious face in every street.

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono

Other Music Suggestion

[Christ Has No Body Now But Yours](#)

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