

doctrine of infallibility, he won the admiration of his fellow bishops. Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore remarked of him, "There goes a true saint." He died in exile near the border of Spain at the age of 63.

COMMENT: Jesus foretold that those who are truly his representatives would suffer the same persecution as he did. Besides 14 attempts on his life, Anthony had to undergo such a barrage of the ugliest slander that the very name *Claret* became a byword for humiliation and misfortune. The powers of evil do not easily give up their prey.

No one needs to go looking for persecution. All we need to do is be sure we suffer because of our genuine faith in Christ, not for our own whims and imprudences.

STORY: Queen Isabella II once said to Anthony, "No one tells me things as clearly and frankly as you do." Later she told her chaplain, "Everybody is always asking me for favors, but you never do. Isn't there something you would like for yourself?" He replied, "Yes, that you let me resign." The queen made no more offers. *(excerpted from: *Saint of the Day*)

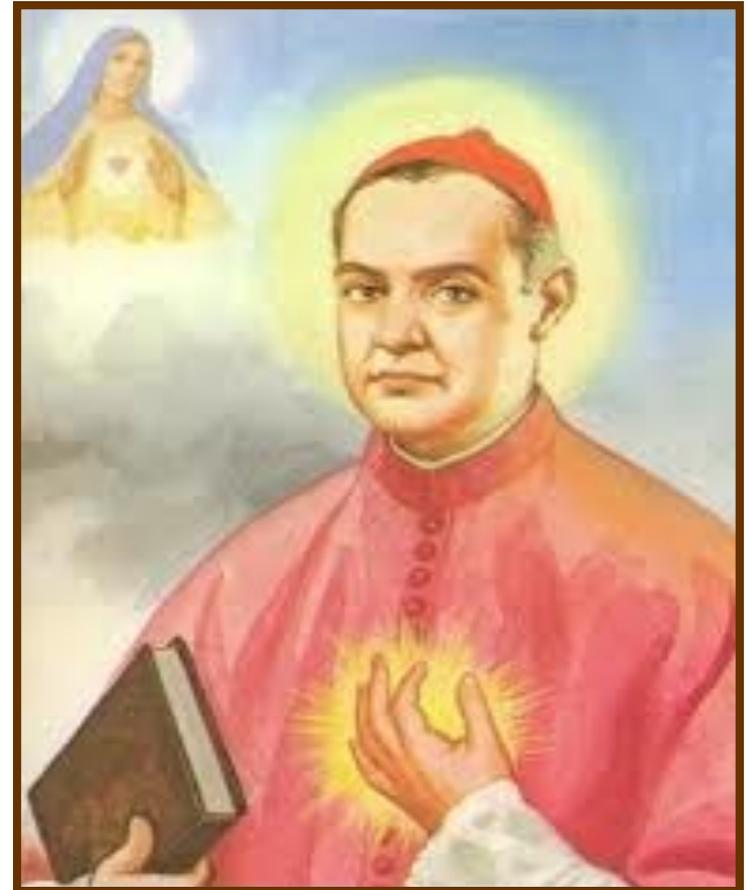
Prayer

Saint Anthony Mary Claret, during your life on earth you often comforted the afflicted and showed such tender love and compassion for the sick and sinful. Intercede for me now that you rejoice in the reward of your virtues in heavenly glory. Look with pity on me and grant my prayer, if such be the will of God. Make my troubles your own. Speak a word for me to the Immaculate Heart of Mary to obtain by her powerful intercession the grace I yearn for so ardently, and a blessing to strengthen me during life, assist me at the hour of death, and lead me to a happy eternity. Amen.

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Saint Anthony Mary Claret

Feast Day: October 23



Patron Saint of

The Catholic Press

Saint Anthony Mary Claret

*The "spiritual father of Cuba" was a missionary, religious founder, social reformer, queen's chaplain, writer and publisher, archbishop and refugee. He was a Spaniard whose work took him to the Canary Islands, Cuba, Madrid, Paris and to the First Vatican Council.

In his spare time as weaver and designer in the textile mills of Barcelona, he learned Latin and printing: the future priest and publisher was preparing. Ordained at 28, he was prevented by ill health from entering religious life as a Carthusian or as a Jesuit, but went on to become one of Spain's most popular preachers.

He spent 10 years giving popular missions and retreats, always placing great emphasis on the Eucharist and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Her rosary, it was said, was never out of his hand. At 42, beginning with five young priests, he founded a religious institute of missionaries, known today as the Claretians.

He was appointed to head the much-neglected archdiocese of Santiago in Cuba. He began its reform by almost ceaseless preaching and hearing of confessions, and suffered bitter opposition mainly for stamping out concubinage and giving instruction to black slaves. A hired assassin (whose release from prison Anthony had obtained)

slashed open his face and wrist. Anthony succeeded in getting the would-be assassin's death sentence commuted to a prison term. His solution for the misery of Cubans was family-owned farms producing a variety of foods for the family's own needs and for the market. This invited the enmity of the vested interests who wanted everyone to work on a single cash crop—sugar. Besides all his religious writings are two books he wrote in Cuba: *Reflections on Agriculture* and *Country Delights*.

He was called back to Spain for a job he did not relish—being chaplain for the queen. He went on three conditions: He would reside away from the palace, he would come only to hear the queen's confession and instruct the children and he would be exempt from court functions. In the revolution of 1868, he fled with the queen's party to Paris, where he preached to the Spanish colony.

All his life Anthony was interested in the Catholic press. He founded the Religious Publishing House, a major Catholic publishing venture in Spain, and wrote or published 200 books and pamphlets.

At Vatican I, where he was a staunch defender of the