

St. francis of assisi

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In the year 1181, a Giovanni Bernardone was born to an aristocratic family in Assisi, Umbria Italy. His father had been abroad, traveling for his businesses, while his child had been born and he came with the displeasing fact that his son was named after what the Italian thought of as the version for John the Baptist. Not wanting his son to be a Son of God, he began referring to his son as Francesco, otherwise known as Frances. Growing up, Frances grew up as a very privileged child, using his father's money to his advantage.

He and a group of boys would run around town stirring up trouble 'til late, and Frances was known as the party animal. St. Francis of Assisi referred to that time as, "I lived in sin." ["St. Francis of Assisi - Saints & Angels." Catholic Online] Francis, whose father urged him to join him in his business, wanted more than wealth: power. Eager to receive it, he quickly joined in the battle against Perugia, Assisi's long time enemy.

Many of the troops were killed, and those who weren't were taken into captivity to be ransomed. Francis had been kept in captivity for almost a year in a small dungeon with several other men, but once his family had paid the ransom he returned to his old reckless ways. Seizing another opportunity to become a knight, Francis joined the Fourth Crusade boasting that he would return as a great prince. But less than two days into the journey, he received a vision from God that came to him in his dream telling him that, "You have mistaken the meaning of your vision. Return to your own town." [Chesterton, G. K.]

" Francis the Fighter. " St. Francis of Assisi,. New York: George H. Doran, 1924. 39.] Unwilling, he returned back to Assisi, humiliated and ashamed that he had gone away in the first place.

In Assisi, he had not returned to his old ways but began to mope around the pastures and streets, believing he had no purpose. One day he had been roaming around an abandoned field when off in the distance he saw a figure, which, as he drew closer, was a leper. And suddenly, a revelation came to St. Francis. This was what he was afraid, being poor and alone. Embracing the leper, he kissed him on both cheeks and gave him all of the money he had on him. Riding on toward the town, he has said that when he turned around the leper had disappeared, nowhere to be found.

He always looked at it as a test from God, which he had rightly passed. St. Francis first got his start when he came across the Church of St. Damien which had been neglected to rubble. As he entered the collapsing Church, he heard a voice telling him to restore His house, and Francis realized that God was speaking to him. Like he had always done when he needed financial help, he ran to his father. His father, never being a man of God, put his son away under lock and key, declaring him a thief.

Francis was put in front of the bishop, whom declared that Francis had to repay his father the money. Francis then did something which declared his love for God: He referred to God as his only father, and shed all of his clothes as to repay his Earthly father. Running out into the streets on a snowy winter day, he ran through the streets of Assisi in nothing but rags taking refuge in the run down Church of St. Damien. He became a beggar, the one thing he

had always feared, begging for nothing but stones. With the stones had built the Church with his own bare hands. Completing the Church, he began to live the Gospel, which no one had ever done before.

Living out in the Church, Francis began to value nature, not looking at it as a whole but individually and as a child of God. St. Francis is the patron saint of animals and the environment for he focused most with God on nature and how each and everything, living or nonliving, was a creation of God, therefore a child of God. He's also a patron saint of merchants, and his own country, Italy. St. Francis, though not a patron saint of, is frequently represented with poverty since he lived as a beggar and hermit, no solid roof over his head. St.

Francis' was canonized on July 16, 1228 by Pope Gregory IX where by that time he had been succumbed to blindness and became crippled with the way he had lived in his younger years. His Feast Day is on October 4th, and is celebrated universally. One of St. Francis' major shrines is the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Assisi, Italy, which is the mother Church for all Franciscan Orders. Locally, we can find a St. Francis of Assisi Church in Ridgefield Park, New Jersey.

St. Francis has many prayers, both inspired by him and those that he has written himself. One of the prayers he had written when he was nearing his death was the Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon, where he prayed to God during a time of need. He was undergoing an eye surgery to restore his sight, where they had to burn most of his face off, and he used this prayer as a reassurance. One of his most famous prayers which had been inspired by

his life was the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. This prayer is considered somewhat of the beatitudes of the Franciscan community.

St. Francis of Assisi is one of my favorite saints because of where he had come from. Most saints start off poor and burdened but Francis had everything and still chose to continue with God. He devoted his life to the poor and to nature, not regretting leaving his past life. He practiced what he preached, leaving a life filled with poverty and pain, suffering from the stigmata and blindness. St. Francis served his God throughout his life, though in the beginning unknowing.

He was indeed, one of the greatest saints.