

St Martin de Porres (1579-1639)

Saint Martin was born in Peru. Martin's mother was a freed slave of either Native American or African origin. As a result of this Martin suffered much discrimination and was abandoned by his Spanish father.

At that time in Peru descendants of Indians and Africans were not permitted to join religious orders so at the age of 15 Martin joined the Dominicans in Lima as a helper. A few years later the prior overlooked this rule and allowed Martin to take his vows and become a lay brother.

He was well known for his austere lifestyle and life of prayer.

Martin was placed in charge of the infirmary and spent his life caring for the sick and dying. He also founded a home for orphans and abandoned children in Lima.

Martin died on 3 November, 1639. He was beatified in 1837 and canonized in 1962. He is the patron saint of people of mixed race and race relations as well as barbers and innkeepers. His feast day is celebrated on 3 November.

Prayer

Living God, Fill us with your healing grace and lead us in your way of love and compassion for all.

Show us how to reach out, to empower and enable all people to reach their full potential.

Break down the barriers we build so we may come to embrace the other who is made in your image.

We ask this through Christ our Lord, who healed those who came to him.

Amen.

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