

Saint Martin de Porres

We remember your kindness and generosity, and the help you offered to all people. You did not exclude anyone, seeing God in everyone, so we know you will hear our prayers. We ask you to make us generous, loving and respectful to all people. Help us to recognise that justice, peace, and the world's resources belong to all God's people.

May we continue to work together for the common good of all, as, with each other, and united with all those who have gone before us, we pray - *Our Father...*

A thought to take away

We are all part of that great communion of saints, people throughout the world and in every century, whose lives witnessed to the love of God in this world, and who continue to be an example to us.

Pope Benedict reminded us that we are all called to be saints.

- How am I going to be a witness for social justice?
- How am I going to love God and my neighbour?
- How can I live as a saint?

Saint Martin de Porres
Pray for us



Feast Day
3 November

Birthplace
Lima, Peru

Born
1579

Died
3 November 1639

Canonised
1962 by Pope John XXIII

Patron saint of
those seeking inter-racial
harmony; all who work for
social justice



*You must love
your neighbour
as yourself...*

”

The Gospel passage used on the feast of St Martin is from Matthew 22:34-40. It is clear that Martin took these words of Jesus into his heart and lived them throughout his whole life.

“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart... you must love your neighbour as yourself.”

As Christians, we are called to work for and support social justice wherever we are. In what ways can I imitate St Martin and live out these words of Jesus in my life?

- At home?
- In school?
- Among my friends?

The life of St Martin de Porres

Martin was born in Lima, Peru, in 1579. His father was a Spanish nobleman and his mother was a freed slave from Panama. For a number of years, Martin's father left the family and ignored Martin because of his appearance – in looks, Martin was very like his mother, and his father found this difficult to accept.

The family was very poor, but despite all these difficulties, Martin grew up as good young man who prayed and tried to live out the teachings of Jesus. He was sent to learn the trade of a barber, which in those days included learning surgical and medical skills. Martin's father finally decided to take care of his son's education, but Martin wanted to join the Dominican Priory of the Rosary in Lima, as a brother.

He soon proved to be a wonderful friar, extraordinarily kind, humble and holy. Before long, he began to work miracles, curing so many people that everyone in Lima would send for Brother Martin when there was sickness.

Martin treated people of all races and colours, showing no discrimination.

He recognised all people as his sisters and brothers in Christ. He founded an orphanage and was generous to sick people outside the priory. Many gave large amounts of money to Martin to help with these ventures. Even animals were looked after by this generous-hearted saint.

Martin had a very humble opinion of himself, calling himself "Brother Broom".

When he died, this beloved saint was mourned by all. He was carried to his tomb by bishops and noblemen, who wanted to honour this humble and holy brother, whose life had been such an example to them all.

CAFOD's work in Lima

CAFOD has worked in Peru since 1968. Our programme has been shaped by two main influences: our relationship with the Catholic Church and the human rights situation in relation to the past conflict and current conflict around natural resources.



EDUCA is one of CAFOD's partners. Here are some of the people they work with. Janneth is seated at the front wearing a white top.

Janneth, 24, is the treasurer of a group of young people who, like St Martin, work to improve their community. Janneth says, "A group of us met at a meeting. We all have the same outlook, the same wish of improving our local area, San Juan de Lurigancho. We started to look at what we could do together; we went to the beach and cleaned it up, then we cleaned up outside the youth centre. We hold an event for children each year around Christmas. To begin with these were social events with surprises, presents and food, but now we also include health campaigns; for example about nutrition or vaccinations. This year we want to encourage a love of reading, which can lead a child to discover many new things - and education will be beneficial for the development of San Juan de Lurigancho."

CAFOD's local partner EDUCA (Institute for the Provision of a Quality Education) gave Janneth self-confidence, and through a scholarship and a fund for her new business, opportunities for a better future. She sees them as a blessing, commenting "I want to sincerely thank EDUCA with all my heart. They give you the chance to study, educate yourself and read and then ask any questions – they answer any doubts. It's like having a second father or mother."

Janneth and her colleagues strongly believe in the potential and the ambition of the young people of the region to better themselves and develop. She works hard to ensure that her experiences can happen for others, saying "you have to look for the doors to these opportunities – they're there, you just have to find them."

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