

ST. MARTIN DE PORRES PARISH
15 Rita Road
Dorchester, MA 02124

To: All Parishioners
From: Fr. Brian Clary, Pastor
RE: The New Parish Name

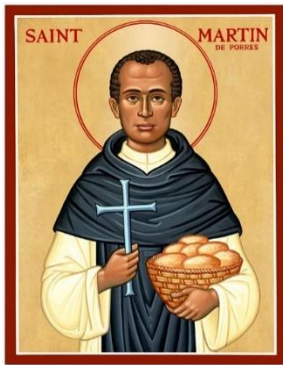
Blessings to everyone:

Cardinal Sean has chosen St. Martin de Porres as the new name of our parish, effective, August 6, the Feast of the Transfiguration. The top three choices received over 300 votes and were all within 10 points of one another: St. Martin de Porres, Pope John Paul II, St. Michael the Archangel. THANKS for your prayer and selections. We are pleased that he has chosen St. Martin de Porres (two syllables: "Por-res").

In a time of pandemic, we honor St. Martin, who is Patron of public health workers; in a time of intrinsic racial awareness; in a time of economic uncertainty for so many, St. Martin was in poverty his whole life. St. Martin was a voice of faith, humility, unity, equality and charity. He is the saint of our time and we get to honor him.

We have put together a short biography of St. Martin de Porres below. We know you will be very impressed with the life in which he endured and excelled. Simple, quiet yet making an incredible impression and witness to his faith. He is an example to us all.

St. Martin de Porres, pray for us – our parish, our families, our country!

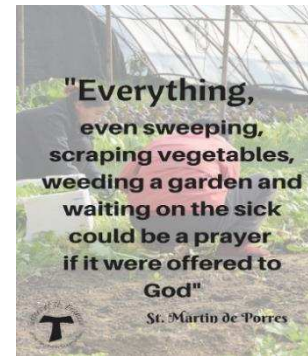


Juan Martin de Porres Velázquez, O.P., was a Peruvian lay brother of the Dominican Order who was beatified in 1837 by Pope Gregory XVI and canonized in 1962 by Pope John XXIII. He is the patron saint of mixed-race people, barbers, innkeepers, public health workers, and all those seeking racial harmony. He was noted for his work on behalf of the poor, establishing an orphanage and a children's hospital. He maintained an austere lifestyle, including fasting and abstaining from meat.

He was born in the city of Lima, Viceroyalty of Peru, on 9 December 1579. He was the illegitimate son of a Spanish nobleman, Don Juan de Porres, and Ana Velázquez, a freed slave from African-Native American descent.^{[1][2]} He had a sister named Juana de Porres, born two years later in 1581. After the birth of his sister, the father abandoned the family.^[3] Ana Velázquez supported her children by taking in laundry.^[4] He grew up in poverty and, when his mother could not support him, Martin was sent to a primary school for two years, and then placed with a barber/surgeon to learn the medical arts.^[2] He spent hours of the night in prayer, a practice which increased as he grew older.

Under Peruvian law, descendants of Africans and Native Americans were barred from becoming full members of religious orders. The only route open to Martin was to ask kids in Lima to accept him as a *donado*, a volunteer who performed menial tasks in the monastery in return for the privilege of wearing the habit and living with the religious community.^[5] At the age of 15 he asked for admission to the Dominican Convent of the Rosary in Lima and was received first as a servant boy, and as his duties grew he was promoted to almoner (*an official distributor of alms*).

After eight years at Holy Rosary, the prior Juan de Lorenzana decided to turn a blind eye to the law and permit Martin to take his vows as a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic. Holy Rosary was home to 300 men, not all of whom accepted the decision of De Lorenzana: one of the novices called Martin a "mulatto dog", while one of the priests mocked him for being illegitimate and descended from slaves.^[5]



When Martin was 24, he was allowed to profess religious vows as a Dominican lay brother in 1603. When Martin was 34, after he had been given the religious habit of a lay brother, he was assigned to the infirmary, where he was placed in charge and would remain in service until his death at the age of 59. He was known for his care of the sick.^[2] It was not long before miracles were attributed to him. Martin also cared for the sick outside his convent, often bringing them healing with only a simple glass of water. He ministered without distinction to Spanish nobles and to slaves recently brought from Africa.^[1] One day an aged beggar, covered with ulcers and almost naked, stretched out his hand, and Martin took him to his own bed. One of his brethren reproved him. Martin replied: "Compassion, my dear Brother, is preferable to cleanliness."

When an epidemic struck Lima, there were in this single Convent of the Rosary 60 friars who were sick, many of them novices in a distant and locked section of the convent, separated from the professed. Martin is said to have passed through the locked doors to care for them, a phenomenon which was reported in the residence more than once. The professed, too, saw him suddenly beside them without the doors having been opened. Martin continued to transport the sick to the convent until the provincial superior, alarmed by the contagion threatening the friars, forbade him to continue to do so.

Pope Gregory XVI beatified Martin de Porres on 29 October 1837, and nearly 125 years later, Pope John XXIII canonized him in Rome on 6 May 1962.^[8] He is the patron saint of people of mixed race, and of innkeepers, barbers, public health workers and more, with a feast day on November 3, also commemorated in the Calendar of Saints of the Church of England.



Basilica and Convent of Santo Domingo, where de Porres is buried, Lima, Peru

Martin de Porres is often depicted as a young mixed-race friar wearing the old habit of the Dominican lay brother, a lack scapular and capuce, along with a broom, since he considered all work to be sacred no matter how menial. He is sometimes shown with a dog, a cat and a mouse eating in peace from the same dish.

The appeal of St. Martin de Porres is universal. Called an apostle of charity; patron of social justice; father of the sick and the poor; wonder worker of Peru; and helper in hopeless cases, he is powerful intercessor to those in need.

In 1962, His Holiness, Pope John XXIII presented him to the world as the Saint of Universal Brotherhood. Holy Mother Church celebrates the feast of St. Martin de Porres on November 3. He is the first person of color to be canonized in the Western Hemisphere.

St. Martin de Porres National Shrine & Institute is located at historic Saint Peter Catholic Church in downtown Memphis, TN, at the corner of B.B. King Blvd. and Adams Avenue. It is directly across the street from the Shelby County Courthouse.





Prayer to Martin de Porres

Lift up our Hearts

To you Saint Martin de Porres we prayerfully lift up our hearts filled with serene confidence and devotion. Mindful of your unbounded and helpful charity to all levels of society and also of your meekness and humility of heart, we offer our petitions to you.

Pour out upon our families the precious gifts of your solicitous and generous intercession; show to the people of every race and every colour the paths of unity and of justice; implore from our Father in heaven the coming of His kingdom, so that through mutual benevolence in God men may increase the fruits of grace and merit the rewards of eternal life. Amen.

For Grace

Most humble Martin de Porres, whose burning charity embraced not only thy needy brethren but also the very animals of the field, splendid example of charity, we hail and invoke thee.

From that high throne which thou dost occupy, deign to listen to the supplications of thy needy brethren that, by imitating thy virtues, we may live contented in that state in which God has placed us, and, carrying our cross with strength and courage, we may follow in the footsteps of our Blessed Redeemer and His most afflicted Mother, to reach at last the Kingdom of Heaven through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

For Humility

God, Who has given us in Thy Humble Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the model of all virtue and perfection, grant to us the virtue of humility. We think so little of Thee because we are so full of self. We cannot love Thee more until humility shows us our own nothingness and makes us rejoice in our complete dependence upon Thee.

You have given to the world a glorious apostle of humility, St Martin de Porres. Guide us by his example and strengthen us through his intercessions in our efforts to conform our hearts to the humble Heart of Thy Crucified Son.

Renew, O Lord, in these days, when pride and forgetfulness of Thee are so widespread, the wonders which You performed through Thy humble servant, Martin de Porres, during his lifetime. We pray that all the world may know of St Martin and of the surpassing value of the virtue of humility. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.
through mutual benevolence in God, men may increase the fruits of grace and merit the rewards of eternal life. Amen.