

St. Paul of the Cross

Feast: October 20



Facts

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St. Paul of the Cross was born at Ovada in the Republic of Genoa, January 3, 1694. His infancy and youth were spent in great innocence and piety. He was inspired from on high to found a congregation; in an ecstasy he beheld the habit which he and his companions were to wear. After consulting his director, Bishop Gastinara of Alexandria in Piedmont, he reached the conclusion that God wished him to establish a congregation in honor of the Passion of Jesus Christ. On November 22, 1720, the bishop vested him with the habit that had been shown to him in a vision, the same that the Passionists wear at the present time. From that moment the saint applied himself to repair the Rules of his institute; and in 1721 he went to Rome to obtain the approbation of the Holy See. At first he failed, but finally succeeded when Benedict XIV approved the Rules in 1741 and 1746. Meanwhile St. Paul built his first monastery near Obitello. Sometime later he established a larger community at the Church of St. John and Paul in Rome. For fifty years St. Paul remained the indefatigable missionary of Italy. God lavished upon him the greatest gifts in the supernatural order, but he treated himself with the greatest rigor, and

believed that he was a useless servant and a great sinner. His saintly death occurred at Rome in the year 1775, at the age of eighty-one. He was canonized by Pope Pius IX in 1867. His feast day is October 20.

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