

Isidore the Farmer



Feast Day: May 15

Canonized: March 12, 1622

Beatified: May 2, 1619

The other farmhands thought Isidore was lazy and caused them extra work. Like them, Isidore was a day laborer on a wealthy estate in Madrid, Spain, about a thousand years ago. Because Isidore took time to go to Mass before coming to work, the other farmers thought they were doing some of his share of the work. They didn't like that. Little did they know that Isidore did have some extra help, but it wasn't them!

After hearing his farmhands complain about this praying worker, the land owner, Juan de Vargas, went to see what the trouble was all about. To his surprise, he saw two angels guiding the plow. If the angels weren't doing all the plowing in Isidore's absence, they stood next to him and plowed alongside. This way Isidore did more than twice the work he could have on his own, and while he was at Mass, his work was getting done, too. Juan believed in the miracle he saw, and he would come to see more in his lifetime. He believed that Isidore saved his daughter's life. He also believed that Isidore saved the life of a horse that was very important for the farming.

Whether or not all these miracles actually happened, we cannot know. But for sure we know that Isidore was deeply devoted to God and showed many others how God is always by our side. Nothing got in the way of his praying to God and worshipping.

Around the year 1070, Isidore was born to poor framers near Madrid in Spain. Although his family was poor, they loved and served God. Isidore and his family believed that it was important to show love for God by helping others. They often gave away what little they had because someone else needed it more. Isidore had a special affection for animals. He fed and cared for them, too.

Isidore met a young woman, Maria Torribia, who also loved God deeply. They married and had a son, but the child died unexpectedly. Maria and Isidore decided not to try to have any other children because they thought God was calling them to a different kind of life. Although they always loved each other, they spent their time caring for those in need and praising God. Maria also became a saint.

Isidore died in 1130 and was canonized in 1622. He and Maria are still very popular in Spain. The Spanish have a dance that honors Isidore and Maria. They also have processions that are used to bless their fields and animals. The Spanish believe that these two saints are very important to the success of their harvests. He is often called St. Isidore the Farmer or St. Isidore the Laborer and is the patron saint of farmers in the United States.