

23 Aug

## Rose of Lima



Feast Day: August 23  
Canonized: April 2, 1671  
Beatified: April 15, 1668

Even as a baby, Isabel de Flores so pretty that she was called “Rose,” the most beautiful of all the flowers. Growing up in Lima, Peru, where she was born in 1586, Isabel developed a talent for gardening, so it is not surprising that she took the name “Rose” as her confirmation name. As she tended the flowers in her family garden, she prayed. Her relationship with God was the most important thing in her life.

Rose’s parents hoped that she would get married, but Rose wanted to give her life completely to God. She told her parents that her dream was to join the convent to become a nun, but they would not give her permission. They needed Rose at home, helping to support the family.

Rose moved into a hut in the garden. She earned money by selling her flowers during the day. At night she did needlework, making designs with colorful threads on cloth. People bought the clothing she decorated. With the money she earned, Rose helped her family and also bought food for the needy people in her community. She put her prayers into action. With help from her brother, she added rooms to her hut and cared for homeless children and the elderly. She became a much-loved woman everywhere in her country.

When people complimented her beauty, Rose cut her hair and rubbed pepper on her face so that she would not be noticed for her appearance. While she never became a nun, she took vows for the Third Order of St. Dominic and remained chaste through her life.

Rose did not take good care of her own health. She did not sleep enough and she did not eat properly. These sacrifices shortened her life of service to Jesus and her neighbor. When she died in 1617, she was just 31 years old, and people from all over Lima came to her funeral Mass to thank God for filling Rose with love for all people.

She was canonized in 1667. We honor Rose of Lima on August 23. She was the first person from the New World—the Americas—to be named a saint, and she is today the patroness of Latin America and the Philippines, as well as of gardeners and florists. Rose’s life teaches us to reach out to our neighbor and to use our talents to help them live better lives.