

Learn About the Saints

St. Stanislaus Kostka

Biography

St. Stanislaus Kostka (1550-1568) was born to a noble family in Rostkow, Poland, not far from Warsaw. In 1564, St. Stanislaus was sent with his older brother to study at the new Jesuit college in Vienna. He was an excellent student and developed a strong faith. He became a member of the Fraternity of St. Barbara, who believe their patroness will bring them Communion at the time of their death.

During his time in Vienna, while lodging with a Protestant nobleman, St. Stanislaus became seriously ill. Believing he was near death, he asked for the Blessed Sacrament, but the nobleman would not allow a priest or the sacrament to enter his house. St. Stanislaus had a vision of St. Barbara and two angels who gave him the Eucharist. Miraculously, he soon recovered from the illness. St. Stanislaus decided to enter the Jesuit order; however, he was unable to enter the monastery in Vienna. He disguised himself to avoid any objections from his family and walked to Dillingen, Germany, where he met St. Peter Canisius, the Jesuit leader there. After a short time, he was sent on to Rome, continuing the journey on foot.

He finally entered the Society of Jesus in Rome on his 17th birthday (October 28, 1567). According to all accounts, he was a model religious, taking on the lowly tasks of a new member despite his noble upbringing. But his time as a Jesuit was short. After only 10 months in the order, just a few months shy of his 18th birthday, he died on the feast of the Assumption of Mary, August 15, 1568.

He was canonized on December 31, 1726, and is the patron of Jesuit novices, students, and Poland. St. Stanislaus Kostka, pray for us!



SAINT
STANISLAUS
BISHOP & MARTYR

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