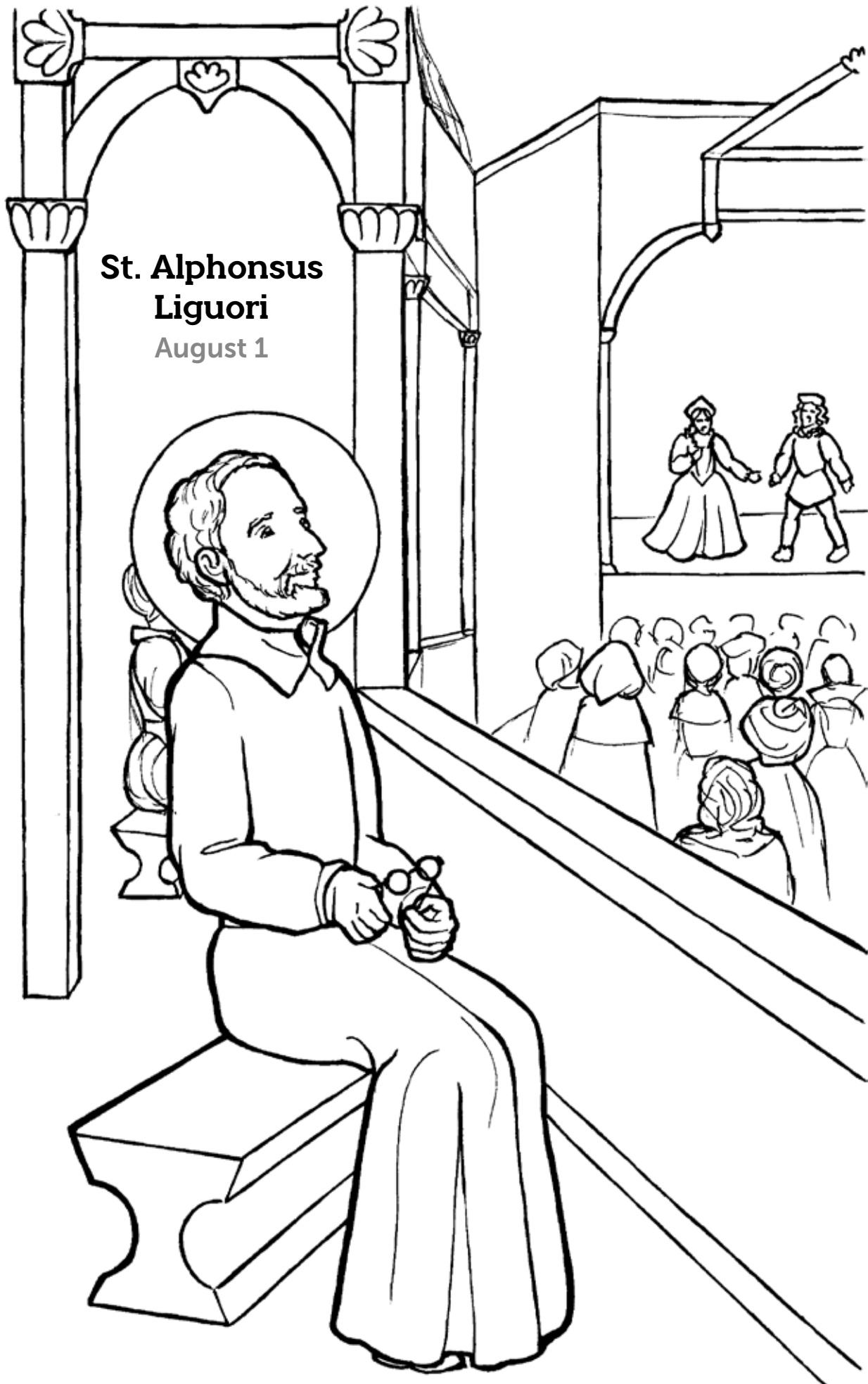


**St. Alphonsus
Liguori**
August 1



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St. Alphonsus Liguori

1696–1787 • Italy

Raised by good Catholic parents, Alphonsus was a bright boy and quick in his studies. His father made him practice the harpsichord (a musical instrument similar to the piano) three hours every day. When he was thirteen, he played harpsichord as skillfully as a professional musician. His love for music stayed with him as he grew up. At the opera, Alphonsus would take off his glasses so that he could not see the singers, but only hear the music.

Alphonsus became a brilliant lawyer, and hardly ever lost a case. Then, one day, he took a very important case and suffered a crushing defeat because of a mistake he made. Alphonsus was humiliated. The judge and the other lawyers tried to make him feel better, but it was no use. Alphonsus no longer wanted to practice law. He realized that being a lawyer had made him much too proud, and that was why he was so upset when he lost. Now he understood that God was asking him to lead a humble life. But he still did not know exactly what God wanted him to do.

One day, he was visiting the sick in the hospital when a miraculous flood of light surrounded him. The building and ground seemed to shake, and a voice spoke inside his heart, saying, "Leave the world and give yourself to me." Immediately, he went to a nearby church and knelt before a statue of Our Lady. He would do as the voice commanded him: he would give up the world and become a priest.

After he was ordained, Alphonsus served the peasant people, especially the goatherds in the mountains, whom no one else preached to. When he was still a young priest, he started an order that would become known as the Redemptorists. He wrote many important books that taught others to live good and holy lives. Later in Alphonsus's life, the pope made him a bishop.

In his early seventies, Alphonsus suffered from a terrible fever that left him paralyzed. His neck was so bent that it pressed against his chest. For the rest of his life, Alphonsus had to drink his meals through a tube. But he offered his suffering to God until he died a holy death.

St. Alphonsus Liguori, help me listen to God's call and give myself to Him!