

**St. Anthony**  
**Mary Claret**  
October 24



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# St. Anthony Mary Claret

1807–1870 • Spain

Anthony was a weaver's son, and at the age of twelve began to practice his father's trade. But when he turned twenty-two years old, he knew that God was calling him to something else. He listened to God's call to enter the seminary and become a priest.

Because of his health at that time, Anthony could not become a hermit or a missionary abroad. Instead, he became a missionary to his own people. He walked all through northeastern Spain, carrying only a Bible and a change of clothes in his rucksack. His poor way of living and his sermons touched his listeners' hearts and inspired them to lead good lives. He founded the Congregation of the Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, also known as the Claretians.

Because of his success as a preacher, Anthony Claret was named archbishop of Santiago in Cuba and had become strong enough to travel. There was much work for Anthony in Cuba. He preached against slavery and visited the poor and the sick, and once again, his words touched people's hearts. But not everybody liked that he was fighting sin and corruption, and he made many enemies. Someone even attacked him! But Anthony survived the attack, glad to have suffered for Jesus.

Isabella II, the queen of Spain, now called Anthony back to Spain to hear her confessions and raise her children in the Catholic Faith. Anthony came as she asked, although he did not live in the rich court. He lived a poor and simple life, and when he was not at court, he visited the prisons and tended to the poor and the sick.

But it was a time of political unrest in Spain. Isabella II was banished, and because the queen was banished, so was her confessor. Anthony Claret went to Rome until he retired in a monastery in France and died a holy death. It is thought that he preached ten thousand sermons during his life.

St. Anthony Mary Claret, help me become a missionary to my own people!