



**St. Turibius Alfonso
de Mogrovejo**
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1538–1606 • Spain

Turibius was a professor of law at the famous University of Salamanca. He was such an excellent teacher that King Philip II of Spain made him the chief of the Church courts in Spain. Turibius was a just man and his work impressive. When it was time to appoint a new bishop in Lima, Peru, both the pope and King Philip thought Turibius would be the best choice. At first Turibius resisted. After all, how could he become a bishop? He was a lawyer, not a priest! But the pope told Turibius that he should become the bishop of Lima, and Turibius understood that it was God's will for him to obey. He first became a priest and then was appointed bishop.

And so he set sail for Peru. Because the Americas had only been discovered by the people of Europe less than one hundred years earlier, both North and South America were called the New World. Now Turibius saw that God's mission for him in his life was to serve the people in the New World and bring them to Jesus.

The new bishop landed in South America and walked six hundred miles on foot to Lima. On the way, he preached to the natives and baptized them. This was to be an important way for him to reach the people. Three times as bishop he walked on foot all over Peru, braving the desert, the hot dust and sun, wild animals, and unfriendly natives. Because many people from Spain came to South America, there were soldiers, and even clergy, who abused the native people. Turibius defended the natives. He rooted out corruption in the clergy and saw that no one took advantage of the South American people.

What Turibius wanted more than anything else was to teach the South American people how much God loved them and how Jesus had saved them from their sins. Turibius knew how important it was to speak the native language so he could talk directly to the people. He had a catechism made in three languages: Spanish, and the native Quechua and Aymara languages of the South American people. His words won over many hearts, and he baptized over one million people. Two of those he baptized would also become great South American saints: St. Rose of Lima and St. Martin de Porres. Because of Turibius, many souls who never would have heard of Jesus became brothers and sisters in the Catholic Faith. When Turibius grew ill and knew he was about to die, he gave all of his possessions to the poor and died a holy death. St. Turibius, help me accept God's mission in my life!