

St. Alphonsus Liguori, 1696-1787, Founder,

Doctor of the Church

Feast Day: August 1



Brief Biography

St. Alphonsus Liguori was an Italian Catholic bishop, spiritual writer, composer, musician, artist, poet, lawyer, scholastic philosopher, and theologian. He was born in Marianella, Italy, near Naples, one of seven children. Educated at the University of Naples, he graduated with doctorates in civil and canon law at the age of 16. In 1723, he decided to leave the practice of law, began studies for the priesthood, and was ordained in 1726 at the age of 30.

He founded the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists) in 1732. The Redemptorists were dedicated to living a common life and worked mainly in popular missions for peasants in rural areas.

In 1762, at age 66, he was appointed Bishop of Sant' Agata de Goti (Agatha of the Goths).

Alphonsus was a reformer who authored numerous books and hymns, including *Moral Theology*, recognized by some as his greatest contribution to the Catholic Church.

He died in 1787, was beatified in 1816 and canonized in 1839.

Why St. Alphonsus Ligouri is Identified with the Eucharist.

St. Alphonsus advocated frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament and promoted devotion to the Blessed Mother. He wrote a book, *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*, which contained content for a month's worth of daily visits, and which went through forty editions during his lifetime. (Source: *Saint of the Day*, Leonard Foley, OFM, and Pat McCloskey, OFM, Franciscan Media, Cincinnati, OH 2013)

He authored the "Spiritual Communion" prayer (see below), commonly prayed by faithful Catholics when they are unable to physically receive Holy Communion. (Source: *Magnificat*, June 2023)

"Spiritual Communion"

"My Jesus, I believe that Thou art present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love Thee above all things, and I desire to possess Thee within my soul. Since I cannot receive Thee sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

As though Thou were already there, I embrace Thee and unite myself wholly to Thee; permit me not that I should ever be separated from Thee."

Brief Quotation:

"Know also that you will probably gain more by praying fifteen minutes before the Blessed Sacrament than by all the other spiritual exercises of the day. True, Our Lord hears our prayers anywhere, but He has revealed to His servants that those who visit Him in the Blessed Sacrament will obtain a more abundant measure of grace." (*Magnificat*, June 2023)