

Saint Francis de Sales



Date of birth: August 21, 1567
Birthplace: Château de Sales, Kingdom of Savoy
Date of death: December 28, 1622
Canonization: April 8, 1665
Feast Day: January 24

Patron Saint of: Catholic writers, the deaf, journalists, adult education, and the Sisters of St. Joseph.

About Francis de Sales:

Francis de Sales was born in 1567 to a noble family in the Kingdom of Savoy. Known for his intelligence and gentleness, he was expected to inherit his family's title, but from a young age, he felt called to the priesthood. Despite his father's wishes, Francis kept his vocation a secret until adulthood.

He attended the University of Paris and later earned a doctorate in law at the University of Padua. His father planned for him to marry and assume noble responsibilities, but after much resistance, Francis was allowed to pursue the priesthood. In 1593, he was appointed provost of the Diocese of Geneva.

Serving during the Protestant Reformation, Francis lived near Calvinist territories and worked tirelessly to bring Calvinists back to the Catholic faith. His efforts included writing pamphlets against Calvinist teachings, which were later compiled into *The Catholic Controversy*. His work is credited with leading 40,000 people back to the Church.

In 1602, Francis became Bishop of Geneva. As Bishop, he dedicated much of his time to spiritual guidance, catechesis, and preaching. In 1608, he published *Introduction to the Devout Life*, a groundbreaking book that emphasized that holiness was attainable by all people, not just clergy. The book became a European bestseller.

The last years of Francis's life were filled with travel and preaching, and during the course of his service to the church, he co-founded The Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary Monastery with St. Jane Frances de Chantal. While visiting Lyons, France in 1622, he passed away and was then buried alongside St. Jane Frances de Chantal at the monastery.

A word from Francis:

"Great occasions for serving God come seldom, but little ones surround us daily."

Find out more:

Books: *Introduction to the Devout Life* and *The Art of Loving God* by St. Francis de Sales

Formed.org: Saint Francis de Sales: Pastor of Souls