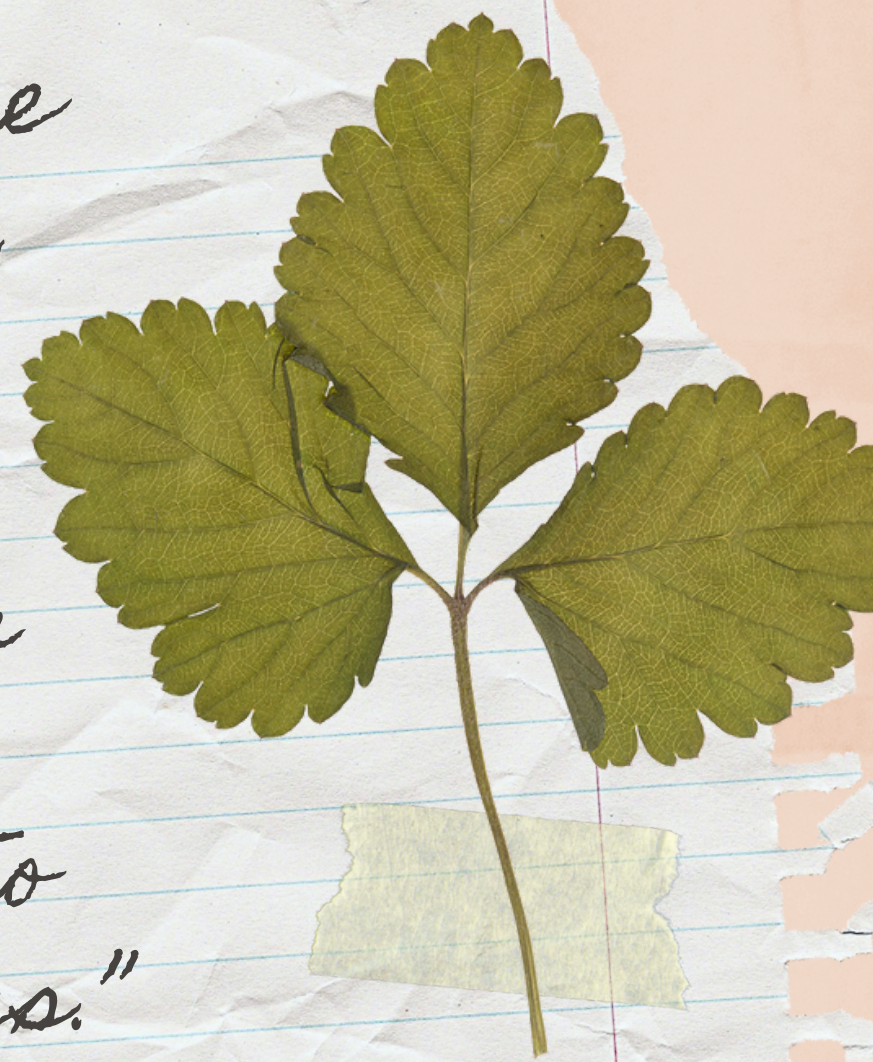


Saint Lawrence of Brindisi



- Feastday: July 22
- Patron Saint of: Brindisi, Italy
- Birth: July 22, 1559
- Death: July 22, 1619
- Canonized: by Pope Leo XIII on December 8, 1881
- Doctor of the Church

"All things are possible for him who believes, more to him who hopes, even more to him who loves."



Lawrence was born on July 22, 1559, and died exactly 60 years later on his birthday in 1619. His parents William and Elizabeth Russo gave him the name Julius Caesar, *Caesare* in Italian. After the early death of his parents, he was educated by his uncle at the College of St. Mark in Venice.

When he was just 16, he entered the Capuchin Franciscan Order in Venice and received the name of Lawrence. He completed his studies of philosophy and theology at the University of Padua and was ordained a priest at 23.

With his facility for languages, Lawrence was able to study the Bible in its original texts. At the request of Pope Clement VIII, he spent much time preaching to the Jews in Italy. So excellent was his knowledge of Hebrew, the rabbis felt sure he was a Jew who had become a Christian.

Lawrence's sensitivity to the needs of people—a character trait perhaps unexpected in such a talented scholar—began to surface. He was elected major superior of the Capuchin Franciscan province of Tuscany at the age of 31. He had the combination of brilliance, human compassion, and administrative skill needed to carry out his duties. In rapid succession, he was promoted by his fellow Capuchins and was elected minister general of the Capuchins in

1602. In this position, he was responsible for the great growth and geographical expansion of the Order.

Lawrence was appointed papal emissary and peacemaker, a job which took him to a number of foreign countries. An effort to achieve peace in his native kingdom of Naples took him on a journey to Lisbon to visit the king of Spain. Serious illness in Lisbon took his life in 1619.

In 1956, the Capuchins completed a 15-volume edition of Lawrence's writings. Eleven of these 15 contain his sermons, each of which relies chiefly on scriptural quotations to illustrate his teaching.