

# Saint Dominic

- Feastday: August 8
- Patron Saint of: Astronomers, astronomy, Dominican Republic, falsely accused people
- Birth: 1170
- Death: August 6, 1221
- Canonized: by Pope Gregory IX canonized on July 13, 1234



"One day, through  
the Rosary and the  
Scapular, Our  
Lady will save the  
world."

"If I do not  
become a saint, I  
am doing nothing."



Born in Castile, Spain, Dominic was trained for the priesthood by a priest-uncle and joined a Benedictine order, the Canons Regular in Osma.

On a journey through France with his bishop, Dominic came face to face with the then-virulent Albigensian heresy. The Albigensians believed that all matter was evil—hence they denied the Incarnation and the sacraments. On the same principle, they abstained from procreation and took a minimum of food and drink. The inner circle led what some people regarded as a heroic life of purity and asceticism not shared by ordinary followers.

Dominic sensed the need for the Church to combat this heresy and was commissioned to be part of the preaching crusade against it. He saw immediately why the preaching crusade was not succeeding: the ordinary people admired and followed the ascetical heroes of the Albigenses. Understandably, they were not impressed by the Catholic preachers who traveled with horses, stayed at the best inns, and had servants. Dominic therefore, with three Cistercians, began preaching according to the gospel ideal.

He and his fellow preachers continued this work for 10 years and gradually became a community. In 1215 Dominic founded a religious house at Toulouse, the beginning of the Order of Preachers or Dominicans.

According to writings about him, Dominic chose for himself only the most meager of provisions. He refused to sleep on a bed. When he reached the edge of a town, he removed his sandals and walked barefoot, regardless of the path. His only possessions were a small bundle and a staff. In his bundle, he kept a copy of the Gospel of Matthew and the Epistles of St. Paul, which he would read over and over again.

In July of 1221, Dominic took ill with a fever. He asked to be laid on the ground, still refusing a bed. He exhorted his brothers to keep a spirit of humility and charity. After several weeks of illness, he passed away at age 51.