



Our Patron Saint

Francis Xavier was born April 7, 1506, in the Spanish kingdom of Navarre. He was the devoted disciple of Ignatius Loyola. As a boy, Francis Xavier was fond of sports. He has been described as a youth with a fiery temperament, but also with a large heart and generous nature.

At the age of nineteen, Francis Xavier went to the University of Paris, where he met Ignatius, who was much older. A friendship formed and with time Francis Xavier eventually became one of the first members of the Society of Jesus and made his vows with Ignatius and five others on August 15, 1534. He was ordained on June 24, 1537.

Ignatius was asked by King John of Portugal to send priests to establish missions in India, newly being explored and claimed by Portugal. The task eventually fell to Francis Xavier. He saw a vast new world opening before him and his one desire was to win it to Christ. Francis Xavier brought with him few possessions to this new endeavor, except his consuming love for God and for the souls of his fellow man. Francis Xavier deliberately chose to live in the most complete poverty and refused to accept any of the material conveniences which were offered to him. He was able to put up with the most appalling conditions on his long sea voyages and he endured the most agonizing extremes of heat and cold.

Wherever he went, Francis Xavier sought out the poor and the sick and he spent his time ministering to their needs. Yet while he was occupied all day with these works of mercy, he would spend the greater part of the night in prayer. It is reported that Francis Xavier did all these things with good cheer and lightness of heart.