
THE CHILDREN'S CORNER

"Let the children come to me, do not hinder them," (Mk 10:14)

A Summer of Saints!

Francis Possenti was born in Assisi, Italy in 1838, 756 years after his namesake: St. Francis of Assisi. Our Francis was always on the run and getting into mischief! He had 12 brothers and sisters. Sadly, their mother died when he was only four years old. On that day, he ran through the house, sobbing and calling out for her. Nobody was able to calm him until he was brought to the statue of Our Lady of Sorrows that was kept in his room. All throughout his boyhood, Francis would continue to turn to our heavenly Mother Mary in prayer for peace and guidance. When Francis was a teenager, he was an excellent student. He was actually at the top of his class. He loved fancy clothes and was known as "the dancer." During this time he began to understand that Jesus was calling him to the religious life but he struggled to follow the invitation. With his good looks, his excellent grades and his family's position (his father was the governor), he could be successful in any worldly path he decided to choose. But during a procession where an icon of Our Blessed Mother was being carried through the streets, Francis heard the voice of Our Lady. As the image passed by he heard Our Lady say: "Francis, what are you doing here? This world is not for you. Be quick and enter the religious life." To the shock of the entire town, especially his father who tried to stop him, Francis left to enter the Passionist monastery. There he began his studies for the priesthood. He took the religious name: Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin. He grew quickly in virtue and was especially known for spreading devotion to Our Blessed Mother. He died of tuberculosis at the young age of 24. There were over 360 authenticated miracles leading up to his canonization in 1920. His shrine is one of the most visited in Europe. *Saint Gabriel, pray for us!*

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Saint Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin

Pope St. John XXIII said that St. Gabriel was like a man born out of time, placing him at the foot of the Cross next to Saint John the beloved disciple, so great was his love for Our Lady. St. Gabriel said:

"Love Mary! She is lovable, faithful, constant. She will never let herself be outdone in love but will ever remain supreme. If you are in danger, she will hasten to free you. If you are troubled, she will console you. If you are sick, she will bring you relief. If you are in need, she will help you. She does not look to see what kind of person you have been. She simply comes to a heart that wants to love her. She comes quickly and opens her merciful heart to you, embraces you and consoles and serves you. She will even be at hand to accompany you on the trip to eternity."