

St. Conrad of Piacenza



Conrad was born into a noble family in northern Italy. He married the daughter of a nobleman, Euphrosyne. One day, while he was hunting, Conrad ordered his attendants to make a fire. The wind carried the flames, which set fire to nearby fields, forests, towns and villages. Upon seeing this, Conrad ran away in fear.

Because he ran, an innocent man was convicted for spreading the fire and was condemned to death as punishment. Upon hearing of this, Conrad stepped forth to accept the blame, saving the innocent man's life. He paid for the damaged property and he and his wife gave everything they owned to the poor in recompense.

Conrad then left to join a group of Franciscan hermits, and his wife joined the Poor Clares.

Word eventually spread of Conrad's holiness, piety and gift of healing. When many visitors began to destroy his life of silence and solitude, he moved to Sicily where he lived and prayed as a hermit for 36 years. Legends say that when the Bishop of Syracuse visited him, the bishop asked Conrad if he had any food to offer guests. Conrad went to his cell and returned with newly made cakes, which the bishop accepted as a miracle.

Conrad visited the bishop later to make a general confession to him. As he arrived, Conrad was surrounded by fluttering birds. Conrad died kneeling before a crucifix.