



Image: *Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo* |
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Saint of the Day for March 23 Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo (November 16, 1538 – March 23, 1606)

Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo's Story

Together with [Rose of Lima](#), Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo is the first known saint of the New World, serving the Lord in Peru, South America, for 26 years.

Born in Spain and educated for the law, he became so brilliant a scholar that he was made professor of law at the University of Salamanca and eventually became chief judge of the Inquisition at Granada. He succeeded too well. But he was not sharp enough a lawyer to prevent a surprising sequence of events.

When the archdiocese of Lima in Peru required a new leader, Turibius was chosen to fill the post: He was the one person with the strength of character and holiness of spirit to heal the scandals that had infected that area.

He cited all the canons that forbade giving laymen ecclesiastical dignities, but he was overruled. Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo was ordained priest and bishop and sent to Peru, where he found colonialism at its worst. The Spanish conquerors were guilty of every sort of oppression of the native population. Abuses among the clergy were flagrant, and he devoted his energies and suffering to this area first.

He began the long and arduous visitation of an immense archdiocese, studying the language, staying two or three days in each place, often with neither bed nor food. Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo confessed every morning to his chaplain, and celebrated Mass with intense fervor. Among those to whom he gave the Sacrament of Confirmation was the future Saint Rose of Lima, and possibly the future Saint Martin de Porres. After 1590, he had the help of another great missionary, Francis Solanus, now also a saint.

Though very poor his people were sensitive, dreading to accept public charity from others. Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo solved the problem by helping them anonymously.

Reflection

The Lord indeed writes straight with crooked lines. Against his will, and from the unlikely springboard of an Inquisition tribunal, this man became the Christlike shepherd of a poor and oppressed people. God gave him the gift of loving others as they needed it.