

BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Amato Ronconi

Life, prayer and novena

Feast day: May 8

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IN BRIEF

Saint Amato Ronconi

Lay member of the Franciscan Third Order, founder of a hospice for poor pilgrims and pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela.

Feast day	May 8
Born	c. 1226, Saludecio, Italy
Died	May 8, 1292, near Rimini, Italy
Canonized	November 23, 2014, by Pope Francis
Era	13th century
Patron saint of	Saludecio, pilgrims

In this booklet

Life

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Novena to Saint Amato Ronconi

Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Amato Ronconi

Saint Amato Ronconi was a thirteenth-century layman and a member of the Franciscan Third Order, born around 1226 at Saludecio, near Rimini in Italy. He devoted his life to the poor and to pilgrims, founded a hospice for them, and went on pilgrimage himself several times to Santiago de Compostela. He died on May 8, 1292, was beatified in 1776 and was canonized by Pope Francis in 2014. His feast day is May 8.

Who was Saint Amato Ronconi?

Amato Ronconi is a saint of the Romagna region who long remained little known outside his homeland. He was neither a priest nor a monk, but a layman, the son of well-off farmers, who chose to live in poverty in the manner of Saint Francis of Assisi, who had died only a few years before Amato was born.

Two passions marked his life: welcoming poor pilgrims, and going on pilgrimage himself. He is known mainly through an early biography and through the testimonies gathered for his beatification process.

His canonization by Pope Francis on November 23, 2014, brought this figure of simple, concrete charity back into the light, at a time when the Church was urging Christians to go out to the peripheries and welcome the poorest.

Key dates

- **c. 1226**: Born at Saludecio, in the hills behind Rimini, into a family of well-off farmers.
- **Youth**: Orphaned, he is raised by his older brother Girolamo.

- **Adulthood**: He refuses the marriage arranged by his family and settles on another family property with his sister Clare.
- **Mid-thirteenth century**: He founds a hospice for poor pilgrims on Mount Orciale, dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary.
- **Following years**: A member of the Franciscan Third Order, he lives as a penitent and makes several pilgrimages, especially to Santiago de Compostela.
- **May 8, 1292**: Dies, according to tradition on his return from his last pilgrimage.
- **March 17, 1776**: Beatified by Pope Pius VI.
- **November 23, 2014**: Canonized by Pope Francis in Rome.

A farmer's son from Romagna

Amato was born around 1226 at Saludecio, a village perched on the hills overlooking the Adriatic coast, south of Rimini. His parents, Felice and Santa, were wealthy farmers. He had an older brother, Girolamo, and a younger sister, Clare. When their parents died, Girolamo raised the two younger children.

As an adult, Amato clashed with his brother and sister-in-law, who wanted him to marry her sister. Amato refused: he wanted to give himself to God. Tensions grew so strong that he left the family home and settled on another piece of family land. His sister Clare followed him and shared his life of prayer.

The hospice on Mount Orciale

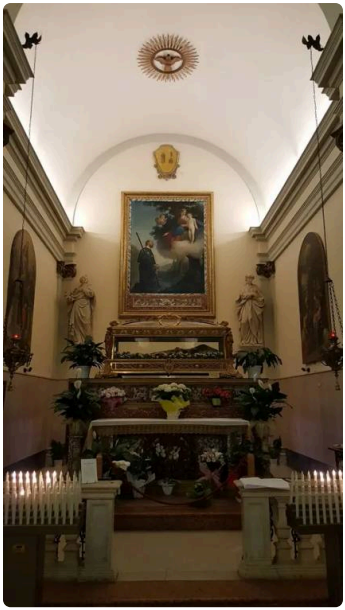
On this property, Amato built a hospice to receive the poor pilgrims who passed through the region, many of them on the roads leading to Rome and to the shrines of Italy. He dedicated it to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary. There he welcomed travelers, fed them, cared for them and lodged them free of charge.

Little by little, he gave away everything he owned. He withdrew for a time to a small Franciscan hermitage on Mount Formosino, then entered the Franciscan Third Order, the order of lay people who want to live the Gospel in the spirit of Saint Francis. He led the life of a penitent: fasting, prayer, radical poverty and service of the poor.

The pilgrim of Compostela

Amato did not only welcome pilgrims: he was one himself. He often went to Rimini to pray at the tomb of Saint Gaudentius, the city's first bishop. Above all, according to his biographer, he walked the long road to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia several times, five times according to tradition. These journeys were for him a time of prayer, penance and witness, and preaching and miracles along the way are attributed to him.

According to tradition, during his last pilgrimage an angel told him that his death was near and asked him to go home. Back in Italy, he stopped at the Benedictine abbey of Saint John in Rimini and asked the monks to look after the future of his hospice. He died soon afterward, on May 8, 1292.



The chapel of Saint Amato Ronconi, church of San Biagio, Saludecio.

The cult at Saludecio

After his death, his body was displayed for the veneration of the faithful, who said that it did not decay and that it gave off a sweet fragrance. Healings were reported. In keeping with his wishes, he was first buried in the chapel of his hospice. In the fourteenth century, after a fire, his body was moved to the parish church of Saludecio. The beatification process opened in 1774, and Pope Pius VI declared him Blessed on March 17, 1776.

In 1930, his remains were placed in a glass urn in the church of San Biagio in Saludecio. In August 1944, during the fighting of World War II, the church was badly hit by bombing; the reliquary was found intact in the rubble, which the townspeople took as a sign. Reopened in 1997, the canonization process ended on November 23, 2014, when Pope Francis declared him a saint.

Why is Saint Amato Ronconi the patron saint of pilgrims?

Amato Ronconi shows the holiness of a lay person who turned his home into a place of welcome. He saw Christ on the road in every poor pilgrim, and he became a pilgrim himself to learn poverty and trust. That is why he is honored as a patron of pilgrims and of his hometown, Saludecio.

You can pray to him for pilgrims, travelers and homeless people, for those who welcome migrants and strangers, for members of Secular Franciscan fraternities, and for anyone preparing a pilgrimage, including walkers on the Camino de Santiago. To pray with him, see the prayer to Saint Amato Ronconi and the novena to Saint Amato Ronconi.

Symbols and how to recognize Saint Amato Ronconi in art

Saint Amato is shown as a pilgrim, with the pilgrim's staff and the scallop shell, the badge of pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela. These signs recall both his journeys to the tomb of Saint James and his hospitality toward travelers.

Where to pray to Saint Amato Ronconi

- **Saludecio** (province of Rimini, Italy): the church of San Biagio, where his body rests in a glass reliquary.
- **Rimini**: the city where he came to pray at the tomb of Saint Gaudentius.
- **Santiago de Compostela** (Spain): the goal of his pilgrimages.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Amato Ronconi, Friend of Pilgrims

Saint Amato Ronconi, a Franciscan layman from Romagna, devoted his life to welcoming poor pilgrims and became a pilgrim himself, walking as far as Santiago de Compostela. He is invoked for pilgrims and travelers, for homeless people, for those who welcome strangers, and for lay people who want to live the Gospel day by day. Here is an original prayer by Saintspedia.

Prayer to Saint Amato Ronconi, friend of pilgrims

Saint Amato, you left your family home to follow the poor Christ. Teach me to prefer God to all my securities.

You opened your house to poor pilgrims, fed them, cared for them and lodged them without asking for anything. Give me a hospitable heart. May I welcome the stranger, the traveler and the homeless person as I would welcome Christ himself.

You walked so many times to the tomb of the apostle James. Walk with pilgrims on their roads. Protect them from danger, support them in their weariness, and at the end of the way may they meet the Lord.

You lived as a layman, in the simplicity of Saint Francis. Help me live the Gospel in my work, my family and my parish. I entrust to you my intention: (name it in silence). Amen.

This prayer is an original text by Saintspedia, free to use for personal and community prayer.

Prayer before a pilgrimage

> *Saint Amato, pilgrim of Compostela, I am setting out. Guard my steps, open my heart to the people I meet on the way, and let me come home changed by the grace of God. Amen.*

This prayer is an original text by Saintspedia.

Intentions to entrust to Saint Amato Ronconi

- Pilgrims, especially those walking the Camino de Santiago.
- Homeless people and travelers in need.
- Volunteers in shelters, hostels and places of welcome.
- Migrants and those who welcome them.
- Secular Franciscan fraternities.
- Families divided by different plans for the future.

When to pray this prayer

Saint Amato Ronconi is celebrated on May 8, the anniversary of his death in 1292. You can pray to him before a trip or a pilgrimage, or when you welcome someone into your home. You can also pray the novena to Saint Amato Ronconi, from April 30 to May 8. To learn more, read the life of Saint Amato Ronconi.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Amato Ronconi

This novena is an original composition by Saintspedia, inspired by the life of Saint Amato Ronconi, the Franciscan layman of Saludecio who welcomed poor pilgrims and walked to Santiago de Compostela. It is not an official liturgical text. To finish it on his feast day, May 8, begin it on April 30. It is also a good prayer to say in the nine days before a pilgrimage, a journey or a new commitment to serve others.

How to pray this novena

Each day, place your intention before God, read the short meditation, then say the prayer of the day followed by an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be. The small act suggested for the day helps you live the prayer in a concrete way, as Amato did. You can pray it alone, with your family, or with a group preparing a pilgrimage.

Day 1: A family of the land

Amato was born around 1226 at Saludecio, in a family of farmers. He lost his parents young and was raised by his older brother. God does not wait for ideal circumstances; he calls us where we are, with our losses and our ties.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for those who raised me. Help me see your call in the ordinary story of my life.

Today: Pray for a family member who cared for you when you were young.

Day 2: Choosing God

When his family wanted to arrange his marriage, Amato said no, because he wanted to give himself to God. His choice caused tension and forced him to leave the family home. Following Christ sometimes means disappointing others, with respect but without fear.

Prayer: Lord, give me the courage to choose you, and the gentleness to do it without bitterness.

Today: Make one decision based on what God asks of you, not on what others expect.

Day 3: A sister on the way

His sister Clare followed him and shared his life of prayer. Holiness is rarely lived alone. God gives us companions who support us and whom we support in turn.

Prayer: Lord, bless those who walk with me in faith, and make me a good companion for them.

Today: Thank someone who supports you in your faith.

Day 4: An open house

On Mount Orciale, Amato built a hospice for poor pilgrims and dedicated it to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary. He fed, cared for and lodged travelers for free. "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35).

Prayer: Lord, open my door and my heart to those who have nowhere to go.

Today: Support a shelter or a place of welcome with a gift, a meal or your time.

Day 5: Giving everything

Little by little, Amato gave away all his possessions. Poverty freed him to serve. What we hold on to often holds on to us.

Prayer: Lord, free me from my attachments, and teach me the joy of giving.

Today: Give away something you no longer need to someone who does.

Day 6: In the spirit of Saint Francis

Amato entered the Franciscan Third Order and lived as a penitent, with fasting, prayer and service of the poor. He shows that a lay person can live the Gospel fully, without leaving the world.

Prayer: Lord, help me live the Gospel in my work, my family and my parish, with the simplicity of Saint Francis.

Today: Do one small act of self-denial and offer it for someone in need.

Day 7: A pilgrim to Saint James

According to tradition, Amato walked five times to Santiago de Compostela. A pilgrimage teaches trust: you leave your home, depend on others, and keep walking toward a goal you cannot yet see.

Prayer: Lord, guide all pilgrims on their roads. Protect them, and let them meet you at the end of the way.

Today: Take a walk in prayer, offering each step for a pilgrim or traveler.

Day 8: The call to come home

According to tradition, an angel told Amato on his last pilgrimage that his death was near. He came home and asked the monks of Rimini to look after his hospice. He thought of those who would come after him.

Prayer: Lord, prepare me for the day when you call me, and help me leave behind something good for others.

Today: Put in order a commitment or task you want to pass on well.

Day 9: The friend of pilgrims

On May 8, we celebrate the day Amato reached the end of his earthly pilgrimage. His reliquary in Saludecio survived the bombing of 1944. More than seven centuries later, the man who welcomed travelers still welcomes those who come to pray to him.

Prayer: Saint Amato, friend of pilgrims, walk with me on the road of my life until I reach the house of the Father.

Today: Welcome someone into your home, or plan a pilgrimage, even a short one.

Closing prayer

> *Saint Amato Ronconi, you made your home a place of welcome and your life a pilgrimage toward God. Teach me to welcome the stranger as Christ, to give without counting, and to keep walking with trust. Protect pilgrims and travelers, comfort the homeless, and bless all who open their doors to others. I entrust to you my intention for this novena. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

To learn more about his life, read the page on Saint Amato Ronconi, or pray the prayer to Saint Amato Ronconi.

CREDITS

Credits and sources

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