

BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Richard Pampuri

Life, prayer and novena

Feast day: May 1

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IN BRIEF

Saint Richard Pampuri

Italian country doctor who became a brother of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, model for physicians and caregivers.

Feast day	May 1
Born	August 2, 1897, Trivolzio, province of Pavia, Italy
Died	May 1, 1930, Milan, Italy
Canonized	November 1, 1989, by Pope John Paul II
Era	20th century
Patron saint of	physicians, caregivers, the sick

In this booklet

Life

Prayer to Saint Richard Pampuri, Doctor of the Poor

Novena to Saint Richard Pampuri

Credits and sources

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LIFE

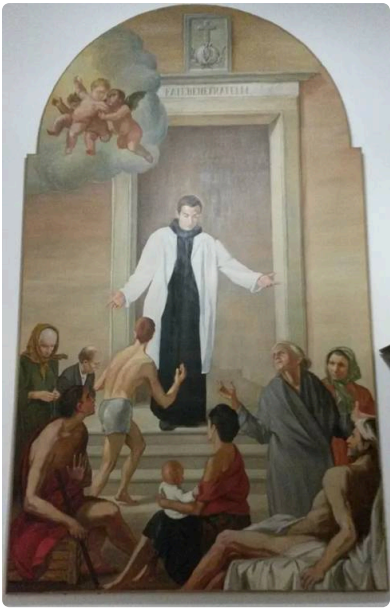
Saint Richard Pampuri

Saint Richard Pampuri, baptized Erminio Filippo Pampuri, was an Italian physician who became a religious brother in the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God. Born in 1897 near Pavia, he worked as a country doctor among the poor, entered the Brothers Hospitallers in 1927 and died in Milan in 1930, at the age of thirty-two. Pope John Paul II canonized him in 1989, and his body rests in Trivolzio, his home village. His feast day is May 1.

Who was Saint Richard Pampuri?

Richard Pampuri is a saint of our own times: a young man of the twentieth century, a student, a soldier in the First World War and then a doctor. He founded no religious order and did nothing spectacular. His holiness lay in the way he practiced his profession: with real skill, with immense charity, and with the conviction that he was meeting Christ in every patient. Pope John Paul II held him up as an example for young people, for doctors and for religious.

His best-known words sum up his ideal. He asked his sister to pray that pride and selfishness would never keep him from *always seeing the suffering Christ* in his patients, so that he could care for him and comfort him.



Saint Richard Pampuri, Brother Hospitaller of Saint John of God.

Key dates in the life of Richard Pampuri

- **August 2, 1897**: Erminio Filippo Pampuri is born in Trivolzio, in the province of Pavia, the tenth of eleven children.
- **1900**: His mother dies; he is entrusted to his maternal uncles in the hamlet of Torrino.
- **1907**: His father dies.
- **1917-1918**: During his medical studies he serves in the medical corps of the Italian army, first as a sergeant, then as an officer.
- **1921**: He graduates in medicine and surgery from the University of Pavia and becomes a country doctor, notably in Morimondo.
- **June 22, 1927**: He enters the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God and makes his novitiate in Brescia.

- **October 24, 1928**: Religious profession under the name Brother Richard (*Fra Riccardo*).
- **May 1, 1930**: He dies in Milan after pleurisy turned into bronchopneumonia.
- **October 4, 1981**: Beatified by Pope John Paul II.
- **November 1, 1989**: Canonized by Pope John Paul II.

An orphan from the Lombard countryside

Erminio was born on August 2, 1897, in Trivolzio, a small village on the Lombard plain between Pavia and Milan. He lost his mother when he was three and his father when he was ten. He grew up with an uncle and aunt in a deeply Christian home.

He attended secondary school in Milan and Pavia, then enrolled in the medical school of the University of Pavia. Already as a student he was active in Catholic Action and in the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, whose members visit the poor in their homes. He was also a member of the Secular Franciscan Order, then called the Franciscan Third Order.

The war years

The First World War interrupted his studies. Called up in 1917, he served in the army medical corps, first as a sergeant and later as an officer. According to his biographers, during the retreat after the defeat at Caporetto he worked hard to save the medical supplies of his unit, struggling for hours in the rain. This effort is thought to have weakened his health for good. After the war he returned to his studies and earned his degree in 1921.

The doctor of the poor

As a country doctor he practiced for several years, especially in Morimondo, a village near Milan known for its Cistercian abbey. He gave himself without counting the cost. He visited the sick at any hour, treated the poorest for free and sometimes left them money to buy their medicine. He cared for bodies, but also for souls, through his kindness and his prayer.

He also took part in parish life: he looked after the young people and organized spiritual retreats. Faith shaped his whole practice of medicine, which he saw as a mission, almost a priesthood. The people of Morimondo long remembered the thin, smiling young doctor who never refused to come.



Morimondo Abbey: Richard Pampuri was the village doctor in Morimondo.

A Brother Hospitaller of Saint John of God

Erminio longed to give himself entirely to God. After considering other orders, he entered the Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God on June 22, 1927. In Italy they are known as the *Fatebenefratelli*, the order founded in the sixteenth century by Saint John of God to care for the sick. He made his novitiate in Brescia and took his vows on October 24, 1928, receiving the name Brother Richard. He was put in charge of the dental clinic of the order's hospital in Brescia, where he treated many poor patients.

In that period he wrote: "My God, I want to serve you from now on with perseverance and with the greatest love: in my superiors, in my brothers, in the sick, who are your favorites."

But his health collapsed. Pleurisy developed into bronchopneumonia, and he was taken to Milan, where he died on May 1, 1930, only thirty-two years old.

Devotion to Saint Richard Pampuri

After his death his reputation for holiness spread quickly through Lombardy, then throughout Italy. Graces and healings were attributed to his intercession. His body was brought back to Trivolzio, and the parish church became a place of pilgrimage. Pope John Paul II beatified him on October 4, 1981, and canonized him on November 1, 1989, the Solemnity of All Saints. His feast is kept on May 1, the anniversary of his death.

Why is Saint Richard Pampuri the patron saint of doctors and caregivers?

Richard Pampuri shows that a person can become a saint by doing ordinary work well and with love. A competent and humble physician, he joined science and charity. He is a model for doctors, nurses, caregivers and medical students,

and an intercessor for the sick and for young people discerning their vocation. In a time when many healthcare workers feel worn out, his example of seeing Christ in each patient remains a source of strength.

Symbols and how to recognize Saint Richard Pampuri in art

Because he lived in the age of photography, Saint Richard is usually shown as he appears in his photographs: a thin young man with round glasses, wearing the black habit of the Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God. Images in Trivolzio and elsewhere recall both his life as a doctor and his life as a religious.

Where to pray to Saint Richard Pampuri

- **Trivolzio** (province of Pavia, Italy): the parish church, which keeps his body and has become his shrine.
- **Morimondo** (province of Milan): the village where he was a country doctor, with its Cistercian abbey.
- **Brescia**: the hospital of the Brothers of Saint John of God, where he worked as a religious.
- **Milan**: the city where he studied for a time and where he died.

To pray with him, use the prayer to Saint Richard Pampuri or the novena to Saint Richard Pampuri.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Richard Pampuri, Doctor of the Poor

Saint Richard Pampuri, the country doctor who became a Brother Hospitaller of Saint John of God, is invoked in Italy for the sick, for doctors and caregivers, and for young people seeking their vocation. Several Italian prayers are used at the places linked to him; here we offer an original prayer by Saintspedia, drawn from his own words.

Prayer to Saint Richard Pampuri, doctor of the poor

Saint Richard, you wanted always to see the suffering Christ in your patients: teach me to recognize Jesus in every person who suffers and whom I meet today.

You cared for the poor of Morimondo without counting your time or your effort: bless doctors, nurses, nursing assistants, pharmacists and all who look after the sick. Give them skill, gentleness and patience. Keep them from pride, and from the weariness that hardens the heart.

You left everything to serve God in the order of Saint John of God: help young people to hear the call of the Lord and to answer it generously.

You knew illness and death at thirty-two: pray for the sick, especially those who suffer from lung disease, and for those who die young. 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.

A caregiver's prayer before work

> *Lord, with Saint Richard Pampuri I say to you: I want to serve you in the sick, who are your favorites. Give me today skillful hands, attentive eyes and a kind heart. Amen.*

Original prayer by Saintspedia, based on words of Saint Richard Pampuri.

Intentions to entrust to Saint Richard Pampuri

- The sick, especially those with respiratory illnesses.
- Doctors, nurses and all healthcare workers.
- Medical and nursing students.
- Rural doctors and places with too few doctors.
- Young people discerning their vocation.
- The Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God and their hospitals.

When to pray this prayer

Saint Richard Pampuri's feast day is May 1, the anniversary of his death in 1930. You can pray to him before surgery, before an important medical appointment, before a shift at the hospital or before a medical exam. For a longer time of prayer, follow the novena to Saint Richard Pampuri, and read more about the life of Saint Richard Pampuri.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Richard Pampuri

This novena is an original composition by Saintspedia, inspired by the life of Saint Richard Pampuri, the Lombard country doctor who became a Brother Hospitaller of Saint John of God. It is not an official liturgical text. To end it on his feast day, May 1, begin on April 23. You can also pray it at any time of the year for a sick person, for a caregiver or for a vocation.

How to pray this novena

Each day, entrust your intention to God, read the short meditation, say the prayer of the day, then an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be. The small act suggested for the day helps to carry the prayer into daily life. If you miss a day, simply continue the next day.

Day 1: A childhood marked by loss

Erminio lost his mother at three and his father at ten. He grew up with an uncle and aunt who gave him a home and the faith. God does not abandon the orphan; he often sends people who take the place of those who are gone.

Prayer: Lord, through the intercession of Saint Richard, comfort children who have lost their parents, and bless all those who welcome them. Amen.

Today: Pray for a child or a family that is grieving, or thank someone who cared for you when you needed it.

Day 2: Studying for others

As a medical student in Pavia, Erminio did not keep his faith apart from his studies. He joined Catholic Action and the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, and visited the poor. His learning was meant to serve.

Prayer: Lord, bless students, especially those who study medicine and nursing. May their knowledge become a gift for others. Amen.

Today: Do your work or study with care, offering it for someone who will benefit from it.

Day 3: Faithful in the storm

During the First World War, Erminio served in the medical corps. In the retreat after Caporetto he worked in the rain to save the medical supplies of his unit, at a cost to his health. Faithfulness sometimes means doing what is needed when no one is watching.

Prayer: Lord, give courage to soldiers, medics and all who serve in times of danger, and bring peace where there is war. Amen.

Today: Pray for a country at war, and for military chaplains and medics.

Day 4: The doctor who never refused to come

In Morimondo, Dr. Pampuri visited the sick at any hour. He treated the poorest for free and sometimes left them money for medicine. Charity is not only a feeling: it is time given, sleep lost, a door knocked on.

Prayer: Lord, make me available to those who need me, and free me from the fear of being disturbed. Amen.

Today: Answer a request for help that you would rather postpone.

Day 5: Seeing the suffering Christ

Richard asked his sister to pray that pride and selfishness would never keep him from always seeing the suffering Christ in his patients. This is the heart of his holiness: every sick person is Jesus waiting to be cared for (Matthew 25:36).

Prayer: Lord Jesus, open my eyes to recognize you in those who suffer, and give me a heart that does not grow hard. Amen.

Today: Visit, call or write to a sick person.

Day 6: Caring for body and soul

Dr. Pampuri cared for bodies, but also for souls. He was involved in his parish, looked after young people and organized retreats. A good doctor sees the whole person, with fears, hopes and faith.

Prayer: Lord, bless doctors, nurses and chaplains, and help them to care for the whole person entrusted to them. Amen.

Today: Pray for the staff of a hospital or a nursing home you know.

Day 7: Leaving everything for God

In 1927, the beloved village doctor entered the Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God. He gave up his independence to serve God and the sick in a religious community, under the name Brother Richard.

Prayer: Lord, call young people to follow you, and give them the courage to say yes. Bless the Brothers Hospitallers and all consecrated men and women. Amen.

Today: Pray for a young person who is searching for their path in life.

Day 8: Serving in humble tasks

In Brescia, Brother Richard was given charge of the dental clinic of the hospital. He wrote that he wanted to serve God "in my superiors, in my brothers, in the sick, who are your favorites." Holiness grows in the place where we are put.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to serve you joyfully in the people and the tasks you give me today. Amen.

Today: Do a humble service at home or at work without drawing attention to it.

Day 9: A short life fully given

Richard died in Milan on May 1, 1930, at thirty-two. His life was short, but it was full. Today pilgrims come to Trivolzio to entrust their sick to him and to thank God for graces received.

Prayer: Lord, at the end of this novena I place my intention in your hands. Through the intercession of Saint Richard Pampuri, heal and comfort the sick, strengthen those who care for them, and help me to make my life a gift. Amen.

Today: Thank God for one person whose care has made a difference in your life.

Closing prayer

Saint Richard Pampuri, doctor of the poor and Brother Hospitaller, I entrust to you the intention of these nine days. Pray for the sick, for those who care for them and for young people seeking their vocation. Obtain for us the grace to see the suffering Christ in every person, and to serve him with skill, patience and love. Amen.

To go further, read the life of Saint Richard Pampuri and pray the prayer to Saint Richard Pampuri.

Credits and sources

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