BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Timon the Deacon

Life, prayer and novena

Feast day: April 19

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IN BRIEF

Saint Timon the Deacon

One of the first seven deacons of the Church of Jerusalem, a martyr at Corinth according to tradition.

Feast day	April 19, July 28
Born	early 1st century
Died	1st century, Corinth, according to tradition
Canonized	immemorial cult
Era	1st century

In this booklet

Life

Prayer to Saint Timon for Deacons and Those Who Serve the Poor

Novena to Saint Timon the Deacon

Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Timon the Deacon

Saint Timon is one of the seven men chosen by the first Christian community of Jerusalem to serve at table and care for widows, whom tradition regards as the first deacons of the Church. The Acts of the Apostles give only his name. According to a later tradition, he proclaimed the Gospel in Syria and died a martyr at Corinth in the 1st century. In the West his feast day is April 19, and he is also remembered on July 28 with several of his fellow deacons.

Who was Saint Timon?

All we know for certain about Timon fits in one line of the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 6:5): his name appears in the list of the seven men chosen by the assembly of disciples, between Nicanor and Parmenas. The rest of his life is known only through traditions gathered much later, which must be treated with caution. Yet this simple mention is enough to make Timon a precious witness: he belongs to the very first age of the Church, when the apostles organized the service of charity for the first time.

Key dates in the life of Timon

- **Early 1st century**: Born, probably into a Greek-speaking Jewish family, as his name suggests.
- **30s**: He belongs to the community of Jesus' disciples in Jerusalem.
- **Shortly after Pentecost**: He is chosen as one of the Seven; the apostles pray and lay hands on him (Acts 6:1-6).
- **After the death of Stephen**: Persecution scatters the disciples out of Jerusalem (Acts 8:1).
- **1st century, according to tradition**: He proclaims the Gospel at Beroea in Syria, present-day Aleppo.

- **1st century, according to tradition**: He dies a martyr at Corinth.

The choice of the Seven

The Book of Acts tells that, in the early days of the Church of Jerusalem, the Greek-speaking disciples complained that their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution. The Twelve then gathered the community. They did not want to neglect prayer and the preaching of the Word, but neither did they want to neglect the poor. So they asked the community to choose seven men "of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom." The assembly chose Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolaus. The apostles prayed and laid their hands on them.

All seven names are Greek: these men probably came from the group of "Hellenists," Greek-speaking Jews who had become disciples of Christ. Their choice shows a Church attentive to the most vulnerable and careful to leave no one aside. The Church has seen in this account the origin of the diaconate, the ministry of service still conferred today by the laying on of hands.

Traditions about his mission and death

After the martyrdom of Stephen, a persecution scattered the disciples out of Jerusalem, and several of them proclaimed the Gospel wherever they went. Acts follows Stephen and Philip, but says nothing more about Timon. Traditions gathered later have him teaching at Beroea in Syria, today Aleppo. They add that he died at Corinth: according to these accounts, he was thrown into the fire without being harmed, then fastened to a cross where he completed his martyrdom. These details, which belong to legend, cannot be verified. Eastern tradition also counts him among the seventy disciples sent out by Jesus.

Devotion

Saint Timon has been honored since ancient times, though no known shrine keeps his relics. In the West, his feast is April 19. He is also remembered on July 28 with Prochorus, Nicanor and Parmenas, his companions among the Seven; the Eastern Churches also celebrate him on December 30. He is rarely shown alone: he appears mainly in scenes where the apostles lay hands on the seven deacons, wearing the dalmatic, the vestment proper to deacons.

What can we learn from Saint Timon?

Timon is almost unknown, and perhaps that is his lesson. He was chosen to serve, not to shine. His name is written in Scripture because he agreed to care for widows and the poor, in the service of a growing community. He reminds us that concrete, often hidden charity lies at the heart of the Church's life. You can pray to him for deacons, for those who serve the poor and the lonely, and for all whose service goes unnoticed.

To pray with him, see the prayer to Saint Timon and the novena to Saint Timon.

Where to pray to Saint Timon

- **In any church**, especially at an ordination of deacons, praying to him with the other members of the Seven.
- **In a place of service to the poor**: a shelter, a food distribution, a visit to someone who lives alone.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Timon for Deacons and Those Who Serve the Poor

Saint Timon was chosen with six other disciples to serve the widows and the poor of the first Church of Jerusalem; tradition counts him among the first deacons and says he died a martyr at Corinth. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is not an official liturgical text. It entrusts to him deacons, those who serve the poorest and all whose service remains hidden.

Prayer to Saint Timon

Saint Timon,
man of good repute, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom,
you were chosen by your brothers
to serve at the table of the poor.
Teach me to see those who are forgotten
and to care for them quietly.

The apostles prayed over you and laid hands on you;
you received your mission as a gift from God.
Help me to welcome my daily tasks
as a service entrusted to me by the Lord.

Watch over the deacons of the Church,
over those who visit the sick and feed the hungry,
and grant us, as you were granted, to remain faithful to the end.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Timon

- On his feast day, April 19, or on July 28 with his companions.
- At an ordination of deacons, or for vocations to the diaconate.
- Before a commitment to the poor, the elderly or the isolated.
- When your service seems invisible or unappreciated.
- For widows and people living alone.

A prayer for those who serve

You can say this before a time of service:

> *Lord, you who came to serve,*
> *make my hands yours among the poor.*
> *Saint Timon, pray for us. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Timon from April 11 to 19, and read the life of Saint Timon.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Timon the Deacon

This novena is an original composition inspired by the figure of Saint Timon, one of the first seven deacons of the Church of Jerusalem. Novena composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is not an official liturgical text. To finish it on his feast day, April 19, begin on April 11; for his feast on July 28, begin on July 20. You can also pray it at any other time.

How to pray this novena

Each day, begin with the Sign of the Cross and entrust your intention to God. Read the meditation, say the prayer of the day, then an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be. End with: "Saint Timon, pray for us." The act suggested each day helps you live the novena concretely. The meditations draw on the Acts of the Apostles (chapter 6); what comes from later tradition is indicated.

Day 1: A growing Church

After Pentecost, the number of disciples increased in Jerusalem. With growth came difficulties: some widows were overlooked in the daily service.

Prayer: Lord, make our communities attentive to everyone, especially the most vulnerable.

Act of the day: Think of someone forgotten around you and get in touch with them.

Day 2: Hearing the complaint

The apostles did not dismiss the complaint of the Hellenists: they listened and looked for a solution. Listening is already an act of charity.

Prayer: Lord, open my ears to the complaints of those who suffer, without impatience or contempt.

Act of the day: Listen to the end to someone who needs to talk.

Day 3: Of good repute

The Seven had to be men of good repute. Timon was chosen because his brothers trusted him.

Prayer: Lord, make me worthy of the trust of others, in small things as in great ones.

Act of the day: Faithfully keep a promise, even a modest one.

Day 4: Full of the Holy Spirit

To serve at table, the apostles asked for men full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom. The simplest service needs the grace of God.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, fill me with your wisdom so that my service may be according to your heart.

Act of the day: Call on the Holy Spirit before each important task of the day.

Day 5: The laying on of hands

The apostles prayed and laid hands on the Seven. Their mission was not just an arrangement: it was a sending received from God.

Prayer: Lord, bless the deacons of your Church and raise up new vocations to service.

Act of the day: Pray for a deacon you know, or for the deacons of your diocese.

Day 6: Serving at table

Timon served at the table of the poor. Jesus himself said: "I am among you as one who serves."

Prayer: Jesus, servant of all, teach me to serve with joy, without expecting reward.

Act of the day: Do a humble service at home or at work, without drawing attention to it.

Day 7: A name almost forgotten

Of Timon, Scripture keeps only the name. But that name is written in the Word of God. The Lord knows those whom the world forgets.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for knowing me by name. Free me from the need to be seen.

Act of the day: Do a good deed in secret that no one will know about.

Day 8: Scattered to proclaim

After the death of Stephen, the disciples were scattered and proclaimed the Gospel everywhere. According to tradition, Timon carried the Word as far as Syria.

Prayer: Lord, make every trial an opportunity to proclaim your love.

Act of the day: Speak simply about your faith to someone who knows little of it.

Day 9: Faithful unto martyrdom

Tradition reports that Timon died a martyr at Corinth. The servant of the poor followed his Master to the cross.

Prayer: Lord, grant me to be faithful to the end. Through the intercession of Saint Timon, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will.

Act of the day: Attend Mass and pray for persecuted Christians.

Living the novena with Saint Timon

Saint Timon is the quiet patron of all who serve without being noticed. During these nine days, you can carry deacons, volunteers in charitable works, widows and people living alone, and those who are hungry. A concrete commitment to the poor, however small, is the best way to live this novena.

Closing prayer

> *Saint Timon,*
> *first servant of the poor in the Church of Jerusalem,*
> *you received from the apostles the mission to serve.*
> *Present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you.*
> *Make me an attentive and faithful servant,*
> *and keep me in the joy of giving.*
> *Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

You can also pray the prayer to Saint Timon at any time, and read the life of Saint Timon.

Credits and sources

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