

Saint Francis of Assisi

Saint Francis' early life:

Saint Francis' name is originally Francesco di Pietro di Bernardone. Francesco was born into wealthy life, since he was the son of Pietro di Bernardone. Pietro di Bernardone was a wealthy cloth merchant. Francesco was a energetic, fun loving and outgoing young man. He would even be considered the "king of the rebels" by many people in the town. In these times, life was just fun and games for Francesco. That soon changed when a neighboring town, Perugia, attacked Assisi. Francesco was in his early twenties when the young men, including Francesco, would pick up their weapons to fight for their beloved Assisi. Perugian forces, however, dominated all Assisian resistance and imprisoned the sons of wealthy men. Francesco was one of those imprisoned young men held for ransom. In the Perugian prison, Francesco had gotten sick and his conditions worsened over time. He would become weaker everyday and he would rethink his life and all the things he is proud of. He searched and searched for something honorable to his name, yet found only fighting for Assisi his only honor. His ransom was paid after a year. Francesco was not the same.

Early adulthood:

Francesco would not stay in town much. He would wander off onto the lands surrounding Assisi. He was on a journey to find himself. One warm day he stumbled across a run-down church. He went inside and found a cross. As Francesco looked at the cross, it spoke to him saying; "Francis, don't you see that my house is being destroyed? Go then and rebuild it for me." Francis started to clean up the church. Francesco was a different man from the one that entered the church.

Francesco would sell his father's cloth and a horse to buy tools to properly rebuild the church. When Francesco's father found out about this, he ordered for a town meeting. Francesco's father would state that Francesco should not be doing this because it is like stealing money. Francesco then took off his clothes and handed it back to his father. Francesco pretty much just told his biological father that he will return everything that was given to Francesco to his father. This event also symbolized Francesco "un-fathering" Pietro di Bernardone and making god his only father. From that moment on he was known as the "child of the church."

Madness?

When Francesco left the town meeting, everyone would call him the madman. Francesco gave up his wealth and "normal life" for true faith and enlightenment. He had made a commitment with god telling god that he would spread god's true teachings. "I am nakedly following the naked Christ." He would even ask himself if he was a madman.