

## **Memorial of St. Martin de Porres**

### **Mass in Remembrance of Deceased Bishops of the Diocese and the Priests who have died since November 2020**

#### **Homily of Bishop Barres**

#### **St. Agnes Cathedral**

**November 3, 2021**

Today we celebrate the Memorial of St. Martin de Porres, a son of St. Dominic in his vocation as a professed Dominican lay brother. St. Martin lived from 1579 to 1639 in Lima, Peru.

St. Martin was the son of a Spanish nobleman, Don Juan de Porras and Anna Velazquez, a freed slave from African-Native American descent. He experienced many forms of racism in the course of his life and so often conquered racism through his beatitudinal spirit of peace and charity. We ask today for St. Martin's intercession to help us to fight the heresy of racism and to be instruments of the promotion of racial harmony.

St. Martin de Porres was known for his mysticism and the Good Samaritan living of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in his service to the poor on the streets of Lima. He rejoiced in the Lord always and loved God with all his heart, mind, soul and strength.

St. Martin apprenticed in medicine and was God's instrument of many healings, healings connected to both his medical training and his mystical intercessory prayer.

Like St. Padre Pio, St. Martin de Porres had the gift of bi-location and was seen ministering to people in Mexico and on slave ships at the same time he was serving the poor in Lima.

The following is an excerpt from the homily of Pope Saint John XXIII on the occasion of the Canonization of St Martin de Porres on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1962:

“The example of Martin's life is ample evidence that we can strive for holiness and salvation as Jesus Christ has shown us: first, by loving God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind; and second, by loving your neighbor as yourself.

When Martin had come to realize that Christ Jesus suffered for us and that he carried our sins on his body to the cross, he would meditate with remarkable ardor and affection about Christ on the cross. Whenever he would contemplate Christ's terrible torture he would be reduced to tears. He had an exceptional love for the great sacrament of the Eucharist and often spent long hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. His desire was to receive the sacrament of communion as often as he could.

Saint Martin, always obedient and inspired by his divine teacher, dealt with his brothers with that profound love which comes from pure faith and humility of spirit. He loved men because he honestly looked on them as God's children and as his own brothers and sisters. Such was his humility that he loved them even more than himself and considered them to be better and more righteous than he was.

He excused the faults of others. He forgave the bitterest injuries, convinced that he deserved much severer punishments on account of his own sins. He tried with all his might to redeem the guilty; lovingly he comforted the sick; he provided food, clothing and medicine for the poor; he helped... [the poorest of the poor and the despised]: thus he deserved to be called by the name the people gave him: 'Martin of Charity.'

The virtuous example and even the conversation of this saintly man exerted a powerful influence in drawing men to religion. It is remarkable how even today his influence can still move us toward the things of heaven."

This tribute of one saint, Pope St. John XXIIIrd, to another saint, St. Martin de Porres, is powerful and moving and though they lived in different times and centuries they shared much in common.

St. Martin de Porres had a powerful missionary mysticism grounded in a refined mystic spirit of gentleness in living the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. He reminds us that living the humility, meekness and gentleness of the Heart of Christ is the greatest conqueror and influencer of the hearts of others.

As we ask for St. Martin de Porres' intercession today, we also celebrate today a Mass in Remembrance of the Deceased Bishops and the Deceased priests of the Diocese of Rockville Centre who have died in the last year.

We pray for their souls as we remember how these servants of God evangelized our parishes in their pastoral charity and their pastoral leadership.

The second chapter of Pope Francis' encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* gives an extended and powerful meditation on the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Pope Francis writes: "The parable eloquently presents the basic decision we need to make in order to rebuild our wounded world. In the face of so much pain and suffering, our only course is to imitate the Good Samaritan." (67)

These bishops and priests we pray for today lived in their own unique way and in their own moment of history lived the Parable of the Good Samaritan. They loved the Lord with all their hearts, minds, souls and strength.

We pray for their souls today. We give thanks for their example and we honor their memory today by asking for the grace of a rich harvest of vocations to the priesthood on Long Island and throughout the Universal Church.

We also remember in this Year of St. Joseph that St. Joseph is the Patron of a holy death. We ask St. Joseph to intercede for us that we may have confidence in the Divine Mercy and in our short life on earth that we may be vigilant about our Catholic Faith and be well prepared to meet God joyfully and peacefully at the moment of death.

Mary, Mother of the Church, pray for us!

St. Joseph, Patron of a holy death, pray for us!

St. Martin de Porres, pray for us!

Pope St. John XIIIrd, pray for us!