Humilitas | SCALABRINIANS

MARY, MOTHER OF MIGRANTS PROVINCE

Feast of Saint Charles Borromeo

Dear Sisters, Formandis, Scalabrinian Lay Missionaries, and Collaborators,
Province of Mary, Mother of Migrants - São Paulo - SP

As we celebrate the feast of Saint Charles Borromeo, let us deepen our devotion to this great saint, the Patron of the Scalabrinian Sisters and Priests. When we reflect on Saint Charles, we think of a man who found true peace only in serving God. Known as the "Milanese Giant," he had a significant influence on princes, bishops, and even saints. Our reflections on him are not merely about history or his role in the Church; they inspire us to renew our vocations and energize our mission work.



Saint Charles Borromeo teaches us that a vocation, which is a calling to serve, whether as a priest, religious, or layperson, is about being active in the service of others. Although he became Cardinal and Arch-Archbishop of Milan at a young age, designated by his uncle, Pope Pius IV, he did not fall into the traps of the church's politics. His real transformation happened in the silence of his heart,where he realized that holding a title wasn't enough; he needed to connect with the people whom he served.

His remarkable diligence was marked by great courage and strength. He had special gifts that he polished with God's grace. At a time when the Church was facing serious moral and religious issues, he played a key role in the Council of Trent, working hard to reform the Church and restore order and clarity. Yet, his true success came from his holiness.

During the terrible plague that hit Milan in 1576, when many leaders fled, Saint Charles remained to serve on the streets. His holiness shone as he heroically took care of the sick. He organized hospitals and personally visited those in need, providing them not only with food and medicine but also with spiritual comfort, something others were too afraid to offer.

He led public prayers, participated in barefoot processions, and pleaded with God for an end to the epidemic. He even started many charitable organizations.

Filled with love for Christ and the Church, Saint Charles was like a candle burning brightly at an altar. A cardinal who visited him remarked, “I saw a living Saint.” He became a beloved figure in Milan, and his death was a cause of deep sorrow for all. The whole city, both clergy and laypeople, admired and honored him as a saint. He passed away at the age of 46, worn out from his tireless work. On the night of November 3, 1584, the mournful news spread through Milan: “The archbishop has died.” After his passing, his name became as well-known as those of the greatest figures in the Catholic world.

As we look up to Saint Charles, we see a shining example of living faith, combining active service with deep moments of silence and prayer. He showed us that true personal reform is the first step toward holiness. May his example be etched in our hearts and inspire us to see our vocation as a gift and a commitment.

Let us be instruments of renewal and hope in a world that greatly needs devoted leaders and compassionate hearts overflowing with love for others. We ask Saint Charles to intercede for our youth, inspiring them to follow Jesus Christ and dedicate their lives to serving the most vulnerable.

Sister Marizete Garbin, mscs
For Provincial Superior, Sister Alda Mônica Malvessi,
Provincial Councilors, Sisters of PMMM

