



**Pontifical Basilica of Saint Anthony of Padua
Messenger of Saint Anthony**

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The Saint of Hope Visits The Diocese of Victoria, Canada

“Relics are parts of the body of a saint who was the Temple of the Holy Spirit.”

Pope Francis

Two first-class and precious relics of the Portuguese-born saint, Saint Anthony of Padua, will visit fifteen Roman Catholic Churches in the Diocese of Victoria from Saturday, October 26 to Sunday, November 3. Additionally, five Catholic Schools will have the opportunity for their students to venerate the relics of the beloved saint and Doctor of the Church.

At the invitation of His Grace, Bishop Gary Gordon, Father Mario Conte will bring the holy relics from the saint’s Basilica, Saint Anthony of Padua, in Padua, Italy, near the enchanting city of Venice. The relics are contained in two exquisite reliquaries, one of which contains layers of skin of the saint’s cheek and the other a fragment of his floating rib.

Father Mario is one of fifty-four Franciscan OFM Conventual Friars who minister in the Pontifical Basilica in Padua, where the saint is buried. According to Friar Mario Conte, the Executive Editor of the *Messenger of St Anthony*, a magazine written, published and printed by the Franciscan Friars in Padua for the English-speaking world, “There is nothing superstitious about relics. The real meaning of a relic is love – they are a link of love between the person who venerates and the saint. In recognizing that only God performs miracles, it is through the communion of saints that we are brought closer to Our Lord.”

Father Alessandro Ratti explains that veneration is confirmation of two very Catholic beliefs which we recite in the Apostle’s Creed: “.....the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.” Saint Anthony is in Eternal Life in Christ in Heaven. We ask Saint Anthony to intercede of our behalf with Our Lord.

As Saint John Paul II tells us, “The most beautiful and stirring adventure that can happen to you is the personal meeting with Jesus, who is the only one who gives real meaning to our lives.” Pope Francis shares “The saints give us a message. They tell us: be faithful to the Lord, because the Lord does not disappoint! He does not disappoint ever, and he is a good friend always at our side.”

In an address in Cologne, Germany, Thursday, August 18, 2005, Pope Benedict Emeritus said of relics “By inviting us to venerate the mortal remains of the martyrs and saints, the Church does not forget that, in the end, these are indeed just human bones, but they are bones that belonged to individuals touched by the living power of God. The relics of the saints are traces of that invisible but real presence which sheds light upon the shadows of the world and reveals the Kingdom of Heaven in our midst.”

Prayer petitions with holy cards will be distributed in each parish to allow parishioners to write their prayer petition and intentions to the saint. Veneration is touching the reliquaries with the prayer petition and religious objects such as rosary beads, holy cards, Holy Scripture, to name a few. The writing of a prayer petition is a worldwide tradition when venerating a relic of a saint. Father Mario will bring the petitions back to the Pontifical Basilica in Padua and place them at the tomb of Saint Anthony. The tour officially ends back at the Tomb of Saint Anthony where the Friars will gather to pray for the saint’s intercession upon our intentions and petitions. The 24/7/365 live webcam of the Tomb: <http://www.santantonio.org/en/basilica>



Notes for Pastors and Bulletin Editors:

St Anthony of Padua: Born 15 August 1195 Lisbon, Portugal

Died 13 June 1231 (aged 35) Padua, Italy

Anthony of Padua was a Portuguese Catholic friar belonging to the Franciscan Order. He was born and raised in a wealthy family in Lisbon. He died in 1231 and was canonized within a year after his death, the shortest time in the history of the Church. His remains are kept in the Basilica in Padua, Italy. Noted by his contemporaries for his preaching and expert knowledge of Scripture, he was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1946.

St. Anthony died on June 13 in 1231. He was buried in a little church outside the walls of the town of Padua. According to the Gregorian calendar, June 13, 1231, was a Friday. Saint Anthony was buried the following Tuesday, June 17, 1231, at Santa Maria Mater Domini. It is for this reason why the nine (9) day and thirteen (13) day Saint Anthony novenas are always recited on a Tuesday.

In 1263, his remains were transferred to the newly constructed Basilica which is part of the present-day Basilica. Because of miracle activity for thirty-two years around the saint's tomb, the Minister General of the Order of Franciscan Friars Minor, Giovanni Di Fidanza, made the decision to open the saint's coffin. Friar Di Fidanza later became Saint Bonaventure. When St. Anthony's coffin was opened in St. Bonaventure's presence, bones and ashes were found. However, the saint's vocal apparatus was found to be intact and his tongue was still red and soft. At the sight of the miracle, St. Bonaventure exclaimed in awe: "Oh blessed tongue, that ever praised the Lord, and led others to praise Him! Now it is clear how great are your merits before God!"

Saint Anthony of Padua is known to millions of Catholics for lost items. Saint Anthony's reputation as a finder of lost things dates to an incident in the saint's life. As the legend goes, a novice who had grown tired of religious life decided to leave the Franciscan community. But before leaving, the novice took Saint Anthony's psalter. The book was very important to Anthony, especially since it was before the printing press had been invented. The psalter had notes and comments he made in teaching his students in the Franciscan order. Anthony prayed that the psalter would be found and returned to him. Anthony's prayers were answered: The novice returned the psalter and returned to the order. We invite you to come and ask for Saint Anthony's intercession for more than the loss of material things, but also for loss of faith, family harmony, health, hope, peace of mind and trust in others.