

# Saint Philip Benizi

1233-1285

*It is said* that the title of “Our Lady of the Divine Providence”, came from Saint Philip Benizi, fifth superior of the Servants of Mary, who one day called out for the protection of the Virgin when the brothers had nothing to eat, and then he found two baskets of bread at the door of the monastery and no one could figure out how they got there.

Philip Benizi was born to a noble Florentine family in 1233, on the exact same day in which the Seven Holy Founders had their vision of the Madonna, who called them to her service. Philip’s parents intended for him to become a doctor, and therefore he was first assigned a good tutor, then he was sent to Paris (where his Aunt and Uncle Frescobaldi

church, they noticed that all of the images in the church turned towards his precious body and kneeled in supplication, miraculously praying to him.

“That same day the whole city of Todi was filled with a sweet soft smell that came from the religious reliques and having secretly opened the tomb, the brothers were clearly



had business connections), and finally he attended the University of Padua, graduating in 1253. He returned to Florence, and for some time he practiced medicine, but feeling yet unsatisfied, he entered the Servite Order in Montesenario, first as a lay brother and then as a priest and finally as a prior. In 1267 he was elected Superior General, staying in that office until he died. He governed the Order with great balance and humility; he founded the female branch with Giuliana Falconieri and led an untiring pastoral and organizational action group. Among the numerous miracles performed in the Saint’s life, we remember the healing of a leper. Philip Benizi died in Todi, in one the monasteries of the Order on August 22, 1285. In 1671 Clement X canonized him. An ancient chronicle recounts that “in the time of his transfer, when the brothers took the sarcophagus in which his most holy body laid, from one part of the church to a more honorable part of the

alerted by everyone who ran from the city, after having touched the holy reliques, they reacquired the sight of the marvelous general. The son of a widow, who died that same day, was brought to the tomb and he was immediately revived. Also many paralyzed people, handicapped people and sick people, while praying in the church that day of the transfer, were cured. So many in fact, sick and deformed came to the tomb of the man of God, and returned home healthy and happy, thanking God infinitely. Babies were screaming after seeing with their own eyes Saint Philip and they said that they saw him above the church. Millions and millions of swallows, whiter than snow, on that same day came to the church and sang praises to God with the brothers. They were Angels of God who appeared and praised his glory, because everyone on earth knew how great the merits were of this glorious Saint.”