

Saint Joseph of Cupertino, O.F.M.Conv.

∞ 1603-1663 ∞

In his infancy, Joseph of Cupertino was miraculously healed of a serious illness at the sanctuary of Our Lady of Grace in Galatore, near Lecce.

At eight years of age while attending school, Joseph had a vision which occurred several times. He was a slow learner, always distracted and was incapable of finishing a story, stopping often in the middle of a sentence searching for the proper word.

After many difficulties but only because of his outstanding virtues, he was accepted at the Franciscan Conventual monastery at Cupertino where he was miraculously ordained to the priesthood. Together with his confreres, he approached his examinations. However without him, they quickly and successfully passed them all. The examining bishop then decided to pass and promote even those candidates who had not taken any of the examinations. Thus it happened that Joseph not only was ordained to the priesthood but is considered the patron of students. He often was in ecstasy as he prayed and spoke to God. Frequently he would physically be raised from the ground and remain suspended in mid-air; in church he would literally fly towards the altar and hover in mid-air above it. He was seen rising in this manner by the faithful more than seventy times while he was at prayer or celebrating Mass. Pope Urban VIII was present at one of his ecstasies and declared that should Joseph die before he did, he would be a witness and testify to what he saw. Crowds of the faithful would constantly seek his help and advice and many were converted to a truly Christian life. Joseph performed many miracles especially among the poor. He restored sight to the blind; often he would take a sick child into his arms and he would heal him. He would write the blessing of St. Francis and he would work wonders simply by distributing the page it was written on through towns and villages. When his confreres came to

speak to him, he immediately read their thoughts and more often than not, anticipated what they wished. Often he experienced extraordinary visions – even of the devil! One night, as the saint visited the tomb of Saint Francis to pray, he heard the doors of the basilica slam open with a violent noise. Saint Joseph instinctively turned to see what caused such a din and he saw a man who was noisily walking towards him. As the man approached, all the candles in the church were extinguished as he passed by. When he arrived next to Saint Joseph, he grabbed the



saint by the throat and threw him to the floor. The saint immediately called on Saint Francis who rose from his tomb and went about lighting all the candles. As soon as they were all lighted, the demon fled at once! Joseph of Cupertino died at Osimo, in the Marches, sixty years of age in 1663.