

# Saint Stanislaus Kostka

1550-1568

*There is an episode* in the life of the Jesuit, Saint Stanislaus Kostka, in which two Angels intervene.

In December 1556 the Saint was sick and bed-ridden for several days, to the point where his brother Paul and his tutor Bilinski were preoccupied with his state of health. While he was sick in bed, Saint Stanislaus kept insisting that they summon a priest to bring him Holy Communion. Given the fact, however, that the landlord of their apartment was a Lutheran, his request was denied.

One night, while Bilinski was keeping vigil over him, he suddenly felt Stanislaus tug at his arm and told him: "Kneel down, John!" And quickly the sick man forced his way out of bed and knelt on the carpet. "Kneel down –

Cured of his illness, and having completed his studies in 1567, the vocation to enter the Society of Jesus matured, but his father gave him a sharp refusal. On the 10th of August of the same year, he secretly fled Vienna and went to Augusta in Germany and then to Dilligen where he encountered St. Peter Canisius, the Provincial at the time, who wrote him a letter of commendation to deliver to St. Francis Borgia in Rome. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 1567, Saint Stanislaus began his novitiate at the Gesù, and after three months was transferred to Saint Andrew on the Quirinal. After having professed his religious vows, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August 1568,



continued Stanislaus – because St. Barbara and a companion came with two Angels and are bringing me Holy Communion." Bilinski heard him repeat three times "Lord, I am not worthy..." saw him open his mouth as if he were receiving Communion. He then made his way back under the covers. Bilinski testified that Stanislaus was not in a delirium but acted with complete decorum, he was in total command of himself.

Saint Stanislaus Kostka was born in Rostkow, Poland in 1550, from a noble family. In July 1564 he came to Vienna to study at a Jesuit College. There he understood that he was called to a life of meditation and prayer.

In December 1566 he became gravely ill and it was also in this period that mystical phenomenon began occurring – the assault of the devil under the appearance of a rabid dog, visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary who places in his arms the Infant Jesus, and the Holy Communion brought to him by two Angels.

he became ill. He predicted that in a short time he would be dead and, in fact, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, while he was lying on the ground according to his wishes, his eyes lit up and, to his novice master, told him that he saw the Virgin Mary come towards him to bring him into Heaven. In 1604 Clement VIII beatified him, this way becoming the first Blessed of the Society of Jesus. In 1671 he was declared to be the Patron of all novices, because of his heroic charity, despite his exceptionally fiery disposition, and because of his total self-discipline and self-control – in spite of his inherited impulsive temperament, and because of his patient strength, despite various adversities. In 1726 Pope Benedict proclaimed him a Saint.