

# Saint Francis of Paola

1416-1507

*During his life* Saint Francis of Paola was forced to tenaciously battle against demons, who often spoke to him through the possessed.

In particular, a young girl, possessed by the devil, was brought before Saint Francis. The evil spirit, who possessed her, shouted that the filthy, bearded, root-eating man was an obstacle to him and his kind. The Saint asked him: “Who are you?” – ‘We are several specialized legions.’ ‘Where are your followers?’ – ‘In the woods near here, where a huge swarm of crows is often seen.’ – ‘Where are they going?’ – ‘They are mandated to destroy all of Italy.’ ‘What stands in the way of their plans?’ – ‘They can do nothing as long as you are here: your great humility impedes them. But, after your departure, we certainly will carry out that which

made Saint Francis waste time in useless discourse. Suddenly, Saint Francis grabs the girl by her hair and orders the devil to leave her body. The demon immediately obeys, leaving the girl worn out, but after a little while she was completely healed.” Another girl was infested by several demons (classified as *incubi* or *succubi*), who tormented her day and night. Francis sent two nuns in his place to tell the demons to leave that poor daughter, to not torment her any longer, and to add that Saint Francis, the Man of God, commands it. The girl was liberated immediately.



has been in our hearts for a long time.’ The Saint then asked: ‘Who has given you such arrogance and presumption to invade and keep under your dominion this poor creature of God?’ – ‘I am not the one who went looking for her, she began to walk with me and I invaded her; I am doing so well here, that I am not able to leave from here.’ ‘Go away, in the name of charity, and leave this poor girl in peace.’ – ‘But where do you want me to go?’ ‘To that place which you earned for yourself from the beginning of your creation.’ – ‘Fine! I will leave from here in three days.’ ‘No, now, you must leave at once! And do not make us waste any more time!’ – ‘All right then, I will leave from her eyes, this way I can take one of them with me!’ ‘No, I prohibit you from causing any harm to this creature of God.’ – ‘And then give me something else.’ Saint Francis begged a religious so that he could leave from the cruets of glass. But the devil did not want to leave and