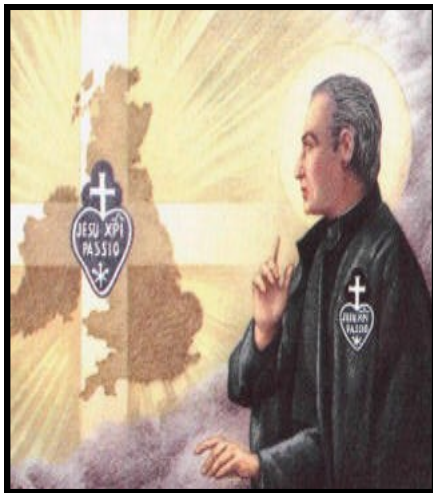


While studying theology there, they also ministered to those infected with skin diseases in the hospital of San Gallicano. The brothers had the occasion to speak with the Holy Father when he visited the church of the Navicella on the Celian hill and he orally granted them permission to make a foundation on Mount Argentario. In 1727, ordained priests, the brothers left Rome to live at Mount Argentario.

The first retreat, dedicated to the Presentation, was inaugurated in 1737. Paul later presented Rome with the new Rule of the young Congregation. After making some mitigation, Benedict XIV gave his approval in 1741. Paul was a contemporary of other saintly preachers, notably Saints Leonard of Port Maurice and Alphonsus Liguori, both of whom he had met. They also had a love of Jesus Crucified and filled with zeal for the preaching of parish missions.

Though he had held the office of Superior General from 1747 onward, he never stopped preaching missions or writing letters of spiritual direction. The Institute did encounter much opposition until a pontifical commission passed favorable judgment on the Passionists. Counseled by and with the good example of his brother John Baptist, Paul constantly endeavored to preserve the spirit of solitude, poverty and prayer. When John Baptist died in 1767, Paul felt he had been abandoned, left an orphan.

On 18 October 1775, Paul died in the retreat house of Saints John and Paul in Rome. On 1 May 1853 he was beatified by Pope Pius IX who later canonized him on 29 June 1867. On 25 April 1880, his relics were transferred to the chapel dedicated to him in the basilica of Saints John and Paul.



*(excerpted from: www.cprtyon.org;
www.saintpaulofthecross.com)

Saint Paul of the Cross

Feast Day: April 28



First Superior General of the
"Congregation of Discalced Clerks of the Holy Cross
and Passion of Our Lord",
more commonly known as the Passionists.
Preacher of Jesus crucified.

Saint Paul of the Cross

*Paolo Danei Massari was born in Ovada, Italy the 3rd of January 1694. His family later moved to Castellazzo Bormida, not far from his birthplace. His mother taught him from an early age that the strength to overcome any and all difficulties in life was to be found in the passion of Jesus Christ. Inflamed with love for Jesus Crucified since his early childhood, Paul wished to dedicate his entire life to Him. One time, seriously ill, he had a vision of hell which completely terrorized him. On a later occasion, during a sermon, he felt himself inspired by the Lord to the love of Christ Crucified; he referred to that moment as the time of his "conversion".

Between 1715-1716, desirous of serving Christ, he went to Venice to enlist in the army. Inspired by the ideals of a crusade, he wished to fight against the Turks who were threatening Europe. One day, while in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, he was made to understand that this was not his vocation. He then resigned from the army but remained for a while in Venice, at the service of a family he knew. He later returned to his home. Even though his priest uncle had left him an inheritance that he might marry, Paul renounced any such intention.

According to one witness, it was in a vision he had of the Blessed Virgin that Paul came to recognize the habit, the sign and the kind of life he was to lead, a life totally committed to Jesus Crucified. Having consulted with several prudent confessors, the Bishop of Alessandria, Mons. Gattinara, vested Paul with the Passionist habit on the 22nd of November 1720. Paul then spent the next forty days in the sacristy of the church of Saint Charles in Castellazzo. His

experiences and the state of his soul during that time are made known from his "Spiritual Diary." During that retreat he also wrote the Rule for possible future companions to whom he refers as "The Poor of Jesus." On a visit, his brother, John Baptist, asked to join him but Paul refused his request, at least for the moment.

At the end of this experience, the bishop authorized him to live in the hermitage of Saint Stephen in Castellazzo and to engage in the apostolate as a layman. During the summer of 1721 Paul went to Rome with the intention of having an audience with the Holy Father that he might reveal his inspiration concerning the future Congregation. The officials at the Quirinal, the then residence of the Popes, would not permit him entrance, thinking he was some kind of beggar.

Accepting this humiliation in imitation of Jesus Crucified, he went to the basilica of Saint Mary Major and before the image of Our Lady "Salus Populi Romani", took the vow to consecrate himself to promoting the memory of the Passion of Jesus Christ. On his journey home he stopped at Orbetello at the hermitage of the Annunciation on Mount Argentario. Arriving at Casatellazzo he was joined by his brother John Baptist and they immediately left for Mount Argentario, to live as hermits. Their every attempt to found a community ended up in failure. In order to preach the Passion they had to be ordained priests and so they next went to Rome.