

Finally, the governor had Saint Venantius and his converts beheaded on the same day, in the year 250 AD. His eleventh-century *Acts* states additionally that he once managed to escape briefly from Camerino and hid at Raiano. A church was later dedicated to him at Raiano.

Saint Venantius was buried outside the city walls of Camerino, where a basilica was built in the fifth century. The basilica has been rebuilt many times in the succeeding centuries. As the cult of Venantius became popular, his image began appearing on coins and in litanies. Springs near the basilica, which were associated with the Saint, were used by lepers and people with peptic ulcers to cure their afflictions. Venantius subsequently replaced Saint Ansovinus as the city's patron saint.

In 1259, during the destruction and sacking of Camerino by troops of Manfred of Sicily, the relics of Venantius were transported to safety to the Castel dell'Ovo at Naples. They were restored to Camerino in 1269 by order of Pope Clement IV, an opponent of Manfred. In the 17th century, Pope Clement X, who was a former bishop of Camerino, further contributed to the spread of his cult: he raised the saint's feast to the level of a double rite and composed hymns for Venantius office. In the General Roman Calendar of 1670-1969 he has a third-class feast on 18 May.

*(excerpted from: www.magnificat.ca//en.wikipedia.org)



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Saint Venantius of Camerino

Feast Day: May 18



Reflection:

Love of suffering marks the most perfect degree in the love of God.
Our Lord Himself was consumed with the desire to suffer,
because He burnt with the love of God.
We must begin with patience and detachment.
At last we shall learn to love the sufferings
which conform us to the Passion of our Redeemer.

Saint Venantius of Camerino

*Saint Venantius was born at Camerino in Italy, c. 235 AD., and at the age of fifteen, he was seized and taken into custody as a Christian preaching Christ to others during the persecution of Decius. His history is one of the most miraculous in the history of the early martyrs.

Having learned that he was about to be arrested, he presented himself to the governor of Camerino, Antiochus, at the city gates, and said to him that the lives of the gods were filled with every kind of crime, that there was only one God, whose unique Son had become a man to deliver his fellow humans from the tyranny of sin. When it was found impossible to shake his constancy either by threats or promises, he was condemned to be scourged, but was miraculously saved by an Angel.

When hearing of this, Antiochus, then ordered the judge to have Saint Venantius burnt with torches and suspended over a low fire so that he might be suffocated by the smoke. The judge's secretary, while admiring the steadfastness of the Saint, saw an angel robed in white, who stamped out the fire and again set free the youthful martyr. This man ended up proclaiming his faith in Christ and was baptized with his whole family. Shortly thereafter, the secretary won the martyr's crown for himself.

Once again Venantius was summoned to appear before Antiochus. Unable to make him renounce his faith,

the governor cast him into prison with an apostate soldier, who strove in vain to tempt him. After hearing of his failure, Antiochus was furious, then he ordered Venantius' teeth and jaws to be broken, and had him thrown into a furnace, from which the Angel once again delivered him.

Next, Antiochus, sent the Saint to a city magistrate to be condemned to death. Instead, after this judge hearing the defense presented by Saint Venantius of Christianity, fell headlong from his seat and expired, saying, "The God of Venantius is the true God; let us destroy our idols."

When this circumstance was told to Antiochus, he ordered Vanantius to be thrown to the lions. These brutes, however, forgetting their natural ferocity, crouched down at the feet of the Saint. Then, by order of the tyrant, the young martyr was dragged through a heap of brambles and thorns and retired half-dead, but the next day he was cured. God had manifested the glory of His servant once again.

On behalf of the soldiers who had dragged him outside the city over stones and rocks, and were suffering from thirst, the Saint knelt on a rock and signed it with a cross. Immediately a jet of clear, cool water welled up from the spot. This miracle converted many of those who beheld it. The rock remained imprinted by his knees and was placed in a church in Camerino, where it still remains to this day.