

SPAIN

In Madrid, his birth city, which he is the Patron Saint of, a Pilgrimage is celebrated surrounding the St. Isidore hermitage, in the district of Carabanchel, every May, 15. Also a major city party is celebrated in the city during this week.

In La Orotava (Canary Islands), the greatest celebrations honor Isidore and Maria. The "dance of *Magos*" (*mago* Spanish for "magician", but also used for "farmer" in Guanche), the "Blessing of the cattle", and finally the *Romería*, or pilgrimage, are all celebrated to honor both patrons of this important city of the Canaries.

Celebrations honoring both saints are also held elsewhere on the islands. For years, the Alicantine locality of Castalla has been celebrating the Fair of San Isidro, where numerous companies display their products in a playful and festive atmosphere. A medieval swap meet and mechanical attractions are especially popular.

A large celebration is held in Estepona, (near Marbella) in Andalucia, where locals celebrate the day by drinking a mix of brandy and a popular energy drink - which is named in his honor. This has led to St. Isidore often being termed as the patron saint of krunk (because of the name of this combination drink in the US).

The Romeria festival in Almogia, a puebla blanco in the campo north of Malaga (about halfway between Malaga and Antequera) in Andalucia, celebrates San Isidro, its patron saint, on the middle weekend of May with a fiesta carnival. Floats from the surrounding farming communities, accompanied by traditionally dressed ladies in 'flamenco' dresses and caballeros on dancing horses, sing and dance from Almogia to the Romeria ground a few kilometers north of the village and the festival includes music, traditional horse races, a bar for horses as well as their riders, and much parading of costume and finery. The best-dressed float is awarded a prize.

*(excerpted from: //wikipedia.org)

Saint Isidore the Farmer

Feast Day; October 25



COMMENT:

If you have your spiritual self in order,
your earthly commitments will fall into order also.
"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,"
said the carpenter from Nazareth,
"and all these things will be given you besides"
(Matthew 6:33).

Saint Isidore the Farm-Laborer

****Isidore the Laborer, also known as Isidore the Farmer,*** was a Spanish day laborer known for his goodness toward the poor and animals. He is the Catholic patron saint of farmers and of Madrid and of LaCeiba, Honduras.

Isidore was born to very poor parents in Madrid, about the year 1070. He was in the service of the wealthy Madrid landowner Juan de Vargas on a farm in the vicinity of Madrid. Juan de Vargas would later make him bailiff of his entire estate of Lower Caramanca.

Every morning before going to work, Isidore was accustomed to hearing a Mass at one of the churches in Madrid. One day his fellow-laborers complained to their master that Isidore was always late for work in the morning. Upon investigation, so runs the legend, the master found Isidore at prayer while an angel was doing the plowing for him.

On another occasion, his master saw an angel plowing on either side of him, so that Isidore's work was equal to that of three of his fellow-laborers. Isidore is also said to have brought back to life his master's deceased daughter, and to have caused a fountain of fresh water to burst from the dry earth in order to quench his master's thirst.

St. Isidore married Maria Torribia, a canonized saint, who is known as Santa Maria de la Cabeza in Spain because her head is often carried in procession, especially during droughts. Isidore and Maria had one son, who died in his youth. On one occasion their son fell into a deep well and, at the prayers of his parents, the water of the well is said to have risen miraculously to the level of the ground, bringing the child with it, alive and well. Isidore and Maria then vowed sexual abstinence and lived in separate houses.

Isidore died on May 15, 1130, at his birthplace close to Madrid. When King Philip III of Spain was cured of a deadly disease by touching the relics of the saint, the king replaced the old reliquary with a costly silver one.

Isidore was beatified in Rome on May 2, 1619, by Pope Paul V. He was canonized nearly three years later by Pope Gregory XV, along with Saints Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, Teresa of Avila, and Philip Neri, on March 12, 1622.

San Isidro, California and San Ysidro, New Mexico were named after him.

His master Juan de Vargas' house in Madrid is now a museum with temporary exhibitions on Madrilenian subjects, as well as on the life of the saint.

FEAST DAY, CELEBRATIONS AND FESTIVALS

Saint Isidore is widely venerated as the patron saint of peasants and day laborers, as he had been one himself. In 1947, at the request of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, he was officially named patron of farmers, with a feast day on May 10 in all dioceses of the United States, with a proper Mass and Office.

The traditional date of his liturgical feast, which, though not included in the General Roman Calendar, has been celebrated for centuries in several countries and dioceses, is May 15. When St. Isidore's feast was first inserted into the calendar for the United States in the year 1947, the feast day of Saint John Baptist de La Salle is still celebrated on May 15, with the result that the celebration of his feast was assigned to March 22. With the reform of the Roman Catholic Calendar of Saints in 1969, St. Isidore's feast was restored to the May 15 date and celebrated as an Optional Memorial. In some places within the United States and Canada, his feast is celebrated on October 25, and in other locations and among Traditional Roman Catholics the March 22 date is retained.

Many towns venerate St. Isidore and his wife Saint Maria Torribia with processions in which the fields are blessed.