

***Shortly after his death, people came in large numbers to visit the holy prince's tomb and pray for his intercession to God. The miracles wrought by his body after death fill an entire volume. The blind saw, the lame walked, the sick were healed, a dead girl was raised to life. At one time the Saint in glory, seen in the air by his army, led his Catholic countrymen to battle and delivered them by a wondrous victory from the schismatic Russian hosts. This apparition is considered his first miracle and took place in 1518 at the Dauguva River. A large Russian army had assembled and threatened the city of Polotsk. A rather small force of Lithuanians stood to defend the city and fortress. Unable to find help, the Lithuanians prayed to the saintly prince to intercede. St. Casimir is said to have appeared astride a white horse, wearing a white cloak. He urged the army to fight and rode first into battle, defeating the Moscow's troops. This miracle was investigated by bishops of that time and confirmed as authentic.

The process of canonization was begun, and on November 7, 1602, Pope Clement VIII proclaimed St. Casimir's feast on the church calendar. The feast day, March 4th— coincides with the date of his death. One hundred and twenty-two years after his death St. Casimir's tomb in the cathedral church of Vilna was opened, that his holy remains might be transferred to a new chapel where it now lies. The place where he was originally buried was damp, and the vault crumbled away in the hands of the workmen; yet the saint's body, wrapped in robes of silk, still intact, was found whole and incorrupt, and emitting a sweet fragrance which filled the church. Under his head was found his hymn to Our Lady, which he had had buried with him.

St. Casimir is the patron saint of Poland, Lithuania, bachelors, kings and princes. His symbol is the lily for purity.

***(excerpted from: www.lithuanian-american.org; www.magnificat.ca)



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Saint Casimir

Feast Day March 4



Reflection:

**May the meditation of Saint Casimir's life
make us increase in devotion
to the most pure Mother of God —
a sure means of preserving purity
in our own soul.**

Saint Casimir

*St. Casimir was born on October 3, 1458, and was the second son of Casimir III, the King of Poland. From the custody of a very virtuous mother, Elizabeth of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Albrecht II, descended from the Hapsburgh family, he passed to the guardianship of a devoted master, the learned and pious John Dugloss. Thus animated from his earliest years by precept and example, his innocence and piety soon ripened into the practice of heroic virtue. At an early age he saw the superficiality and corruption of court life. Throughout his short life- he died of tuberculosis on March 4, 1483 and was buried at Vilna, where his relics still rest in the church of St. Stanislaus - he dedicated himself wholly to the service of God and of his fellow-men. His love for the poor was immense. He was also renowned for his devotion to the Eucharist and to the Blessed Virgin.

* (excerpted from: The Saints In Season by Austin Flannery, O.P.)

**In Poland, he was given the title of "The Peace Maker." Devout from his infancy, the boy gave himself up to devotion and penance, and had a horror of anything approaching softness or self-indulgence. His bed was often the ground, and he would spend a great part of the night in prayer and meditation, mainly on the passion of our Saviour. His clothes were plain, and under them he wore a hairshirt. Living always in the presence of God, he was invariably serene and cheerful, and pleasant to all. The saint's love of God showed itself in his love of the poor who are Christ's members, and for the relief of these the young prince gave all he possessed, using in their behalf the influence he had with his father and with his brother Ladislaus when he became king of Bohemia. In honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Casimir frequently recited the long Latin hymn "Omni die dic Mariae," a copy of which was buried with him. This hymn, part of which is familiar to us

through Bittleston's version, "Daily, daily sing to Mary," is not uncommonly called the Hymn of St. Casimir, but it was not composed by him; it is three centuries older than his time.

The nobles of Hungary, dissatisfied with their King, Matthias Corvinus, in 1471 begged the King of Poland to allow them to place his son Casimir on the throne. The saint, at the time not yet even fifteen years old, was very unwilling to consent, but in obedience to his father he went to the frontier at the head of an army. There, hearing that Matthias had himself assembled a large body of troops, and finding that his own soldiers were deserting in large numbers because they could not get their pay, Casimir decided upon the advice of his officers to return home. The knowledge that Pope Sixtus IV had sent an embassy to his father to deter him from the expedition made the young prince carry out his resolution with the firmer conviction that he was acting correctly. King Casimir, however, was greatly incensed at the failure of his ambitious projects and would not permit his son to return to Cracow, but relegated him to the castle of Dobzki. The young man obeyed and remained in confinement there for three months. Convinced of the injustice of the war upon which he had so nearly embarked, and determined to have no further part in these internecine conflicts which only facilitated the further progress into Europe of the Turks, St. Casimir could never again be persuaded to take up arms though urged to do so by his father and invited once more by the disaffected Hungarian magnets. He returned to his studies and his prayers, though for a time he was viceroy in Poland during the absence of his father. An attempt was made to induce him to marry a daughter of the Emperor Frederick III, but he refused to relax the celibacy he had imposed upon himself.

* (excerpted from www.catholicculture.org)