

Holy Hero for November 2009

Let's get to know.....**Saint Francis Cabrini**

Feast day Nov. 13

Patron saint of immigrants, orphans

By Stephanie Purcell for the Catholic Identity Committee



Francis Cabrini was born in Italy in 1850, the tenth of eleven children. Her parents were simple people, but passed on their great love for God to their children. Growing up, she received training to be a teacher. Her dream was to one day become a missionary to China. A missionary is one sent to a far away place to tell and teach others about God. When Francis was 18 years old, she wanted to become a religious Sister, but poor health kept her from joining. A priest asked her to teach in a girls' school, which she did for six years. She was finally able to become a Sister at the age of 27. She did so well in her work at the girls' school that the bishop asked her to start a special group of Sisters in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Her love for Jesus was great, and she wanted to do everything she could to please Him.

One day, Francis wrote to Pope Leo XIII, wanting to become a missionary to China. Instead, he told her she was needed in the United States of America to help the many poor immigrants there. Immigrants are people who come into another country to stay. Francis and six other Sisters arrived in New York in 1889. They worked mostly with the Italian immigrants there. People soon began to call her Mother Cabrini because she always treated strangers as her own family. She was prayerful and humble, but at the same time was a skilled organizer and hard worker when it came to serving God's people. Mother Cabrini traveled very much. She started 67 schools, hospitals and orphanages in the U.S., Europe, and South America. Mother Cabrini became a U.S. citizen during her life and was the 1st U.S. citizen to be proclaimed a saint (by Pope Pius XII on July 7, 1946). She died in Chicago at the age of 67. There are three shrines honoring Mother Cabrini in the U.S.: The Shrine Chapel in New York City, The National Shrine of Francis Xavier Cabrini in Chicago, and The Mother Cabrini Shrine in Golden, Colorado.