

ST. FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI (MOTHER CABRINI)



As a child in northern Italy, Frances Cabrini was enthralled (*fascinated, enchanted*) by stories of missionaries. Sadly, because of her poor health, she was unable to join a religious community, the Daughters of the Sacred Heart. But with their help she received a teaching certificate, and taught in a village in Italy.

In 1880, at the age of 30, with seven other young women, Frances founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The petite (*small, little*) Mother Cabrini was eager to spread the love of Jesus around the world – like the missionaries whose stories she had loved as a child! She particularly longed to go to China. When she met with Pope Leo XIII with that goal in mind, he told her to go “not to the East, but to the West” – to New York instead.

Mother Cabrini and her Sisters arrived in New York in 1889. They found great poverty and need. She organized catechism (*about the Christian religion*) and education classes for the Italian immigrants, and provided for orphaned children.

Eventually Mother Cabrini received requests to open schools from all over the world. She traveled to Europe, Central and South America and throughout the United States, making 23 journeys across the Atlantic Ocean, and establishing 67 institutions: schools, hospitals and homes for orphaned children.





In 1909, she became a citizen of the United States. She died in Chicago on December 22, 1917 at the age of 67. Mother Cabrini became the first American citizen to be named a Saint. She was canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1946. She is the Patroness of Immigrants.

Today, her missionary Sisters work on six continents in 17 countries. They carry out their work of evangelization, education, and health care, with a focus on the poor and underprivileged, especially immigrants, migrants and refugees. The little girl who dreamed of being a missionary became one after all!

FUN FACTS ABOUT MOTHER CABRINI

Match these facts about St. Frances Xavier Cabrini to the letters below...

1. St. Frances Xavier Cabrini was born in what country?
2. Mother Cabrini's job before she became a sister?
3. Mother Cabrini became a citizen of this country?
4. St. Frances Xavier Cabrini is patroness of _____?

- A) United States of America
- B) Italy
- C) Teacher
- D) Immigrants

Answer key: 1-B, 2-C, 3-A, 4-D

"Today love must not be hidden... it must be living, acting and true!"

SAINT FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI