

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

March 9, 2010 at 7:00am

Mar. 9, St. Frances of Rome, Wife, Mother, Founder

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NCR Today

Today is the feast of St. Frances of Rome, founder of the Benedictine Oblate Sisters of Tor de' Specchi, and patron of all Oblates of St. Benedict.

Frances was born in 1384 to Paul de Busso and his wife, Jacobella dei Roffedeschi, members of the Roman nobility. At fourteen, she was married to Lorenzo de Ponziano. For forty years Frances and Lorenzo were happy, enduring together the loss of two of their six children to plague, and the turmoil of the Western Schism, which brought the temporary banishment of Lorenzo, the taking of another of their children as a hostage, and the destruction of their estates.

Frances and her sister-in-law nursed the sick, gathered firewood for the poor, and set an example for other Roman noblewomen that drew many of them to join them in their work.

Frances founded the Congregation of Benedictine Oblates of Tor de' Specchi, which she joined after Lorenzo's death.

Frances attributed her healing powers to her guardian angel, who was visible to her. She was a successful manager of her husband's palace and estates and believed that a housewife can find God in her domestic duties.

Frances died on March 9, 1440. "The angel has finished his work," she said. "He is beckoning me to follow."

She was canonized by Pope Paul V in 1608.

On March 9, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI visited the Monastery of the Benedictine Oblate Sisters of St. Frances of Rome at Tor de' Specchi and delivered an
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2009/march/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20090309_francesca-romana_en.html> address.

For information about St. Frances of Rome, see
<http://www.abebooks.com/servlet/SearchResults?an=kaumans&sts=t&tn=golden+tapestries&x=77&y=11>>
Golden Tapestries: The Story of the Life and Times of St. Frances of Rome, by Sister M. Gregory Kaumans, OSU, St. Paul Publications, New York, 1960, and
Lives of St. Frances of Rome, by Georgiana Fullerton, Burns and Lambert, London, 1855.

For an account of a pilgrimage to Rome by parishioners from the only church in England named for St. Frances of Rome, click <http://www.stfrancesofrome.org.uk/ourpatronsaint-stfrancesofrome.htm>> here.

Click here for images of St. Frances of Rome, including one of her remains which are enshrined in a crystal coffin in the Church of Santa Francesca Romana.

Click here for a picture of the St. Frances of Rome Founder Statue by Pietro Galli at St. Peter's Basilica.

For information about Benedictine Oblates, click here.

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