

San Rufino



St. Rufino was the first bishop of Assisi and was martyred by the pagans of Assisi in 238 A.D. St. Rufino's body was found by the few Christian faithful and buried in a small chapel. Eventually a larger church, San Rufino was built over his crypt. By the Middle Ages, the canons of this church and the local nobility had gained such power and influence that they conspired to transfer the bishop's throne and the title of cathedral to San Rufino from Santa Maria Maggiore. St. Clare's grandfather Offreduccio donated part of the land in front of his manor house for the enlargement of the new cathedral which was started in 1134. The bell tower of the cathedral was built over an ancient

Roman cistern.



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The parish puts its Christmas creche in the cistern every year.



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The crypt of St. Rufino.



Under this altar is the crypt of little "Ruffie" or little St. Rufino. Ruffie was a small boy who those in authority tried to force to lie to cover their sins. Little Ruffie refused to lie so they killed him.

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Every year on Good Friday, the head Cannon takes down this corpus and parades him through Assisi. When the corpus is taken down the arms fall to his sides.

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An hour later, Mary is taken down and paraded through the town. Later, they meet at a prescribed point. The faithful process with one or the other statue. Notice the swords

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piercing Mary.



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Francis and Clare were baptized in this cathedral. Also baptized here were Leo, Bernardo, Giles, Elias, Peter Catanio, Sylvester and Rufino, among the first companions, and the infant who became Frederick II, emperor. This was the only baptismal font in Assisi until 1924 or 1925.

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We renewed our Baptismal promises and were able to dip our hands in the font.

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Baptism is the central moment in our Christian journey through life. Francis' and Clare's baptisms in San Rufino remind us of our own immersion into the full paschal mystery of Christ.

Francis preached here on a number of occasions. This is where Clare probably heard him. Clare's spiritual life was nurtured at San Rufino. She came to be known as a woman of prayer, penance, fasting and love for the poor even while she lived in her family home. Francis responded to this and saw in Clare the strength to be a new leader of women. She becomes the "New Woman of the Valley of Spoleto."

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Francis and Clare complemented each other. How do you see yourself in the paradigm of complementarity?

Francis undertook a definite mission to the people. What was the mission, and how did he prepare for it? What is your mission, and how do you prepare for it?

Reflect on Francis' integration of prayer, evangelization and fraternity.

Francis openly preached about his faults and often used himself as an example to instruct the people. Does this fact say anything about our own particular style of Franciscan preaching? How do you relate preaching to your own personal religious experience? If you are not preaching, why not?