

PRESS RELEASE

Att: News and Features

Immediate Release - 24 September 2014

Messenger of Saint Anthony

Via Orto Botanico 11,

35123 Padova, Italy

Tel: +39 498225000

Web: www.saintanthonyofpadua.net

Francis of Assisi and Francis of Argentina joined in friendship by St Anthony of Padua



“Relics are parts of the body of a Saint which was the Temple of the Holy Spirit.”
Pope Francis

St Francis of Assisi and Pope Francis of Argentina have an important friend in common – St Anthony of Padua.

The much loved 13th century friar was a contemporary of St Francis, and one of the earliest members of the Franciscan Order founded by St Francis in 1209.

When, in the year 2000, Pope Francis was Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, he blessed the faithful gathered in the Cathedral with a precious reliquary containing St. Anthony's floating rib.

The new millennium heralded hope for many, but Argentina was a country in turmoil, facing imminent economic collapse. The financial crisis sparked rioting as frustration mounted over the lack of employment opportunities, the devaluing of the currency, the collapse of the government. Over 50% of Argentines were classed as poor.

The future Pope's devotion to St Anthony was due to the Saint's love, care and concern for the poor and marginalised. Known to help people find lost items, St Anthony intercedes with those trying to find a job, a home, faith and hope, all of which were in short supply in Argentina in 2000.

From 26 October – 2 November 2014, St Anthony will be visiting Northern California in the form of the very relic which Pope Francis venerated fourteen years ago in Argentina.

This relic will be accompanied by Fr Mario Conte, a Franciscan Friar from Padua, Italy where the Saint is buried. According to Fr Mario, who is Editor of the *Messenger of St Anthony*, "There is nothing superstitious about relics. The real meaning of a relic is love – they are a link of love between the person who venerates and the saint."

This relic of the Saint's 'floating' rib was also venerated by St Anthony's fellow Portuguese countrywoman, Sr Lucia of Fatima, when it was taken to her convent, the Monastery of Carmelite nuns at Coimbra, in January 1995. Sr Lucia Santos, who died in 2005, was one of the three children who witnessed a series of appearances of the Virgin Mary in Fatima in 1917.

Notes for Editors:

St Anthony of Padua:	Born	15 August 1195	Lisbon, Portugal
	Died	13 June 1231 (aged 35)	Padua, Italy

Anthony of Padua was a Portuguese Catholic friar belonging to the Franciscan Order. He was born and raised in a wealthy family in Lisbon. Noted by his contemporaries for his forceful preaching and expert knowledge of scripture, he was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1946. St Anthony was canonised a year after his death. His remains are kept in the Basilica in Padua, Italy. When St Bonaventure presided over the opening of Anthony's coffin in 1263, he discovered that the Saint's vocal organs were intact, including a red and soft tongue. "Oh blessed tongue that ever praised the Lord and led others to praise Him!" St Bonaventure exclaimed, adding, "Now we can clearly see how great indeed have been your merits before God."

Visit of the Relics of St Anthony to Northern California

Sunday, October 26 2014 **St. Thomas More Church, San Francisco**
8AM, 10AM, 11:45AM, 8PM masses with veneration

Monday, October 27 2014 **St. Paul's Church, San Pablo**
7:30 AM mass, veneration all day; 7:00 PM mass

Tuesday, October 28 2014 **Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, San Francisco**
12:10PM and 6PM masses with veneration

Wednesday, October 29 2014 **St. Dominic's Church, San Francisco**
5:30PM and 7:30PM masses with veneration

Thursday, October 30 2014 **St. Anne of the Sunset, San Francisco**
12PM and 6PM masses with veneration

Friday, October 31 2014 **National Shrine of St. Francis of Assisi, San Francisco**
12:15PM mass with veneration until 7 PM

Saturday, November 1 2014 **St. Paul of the Shipwreck, San Francisco**
12:30PM mass with veneration

Saturday, November 1 2014 **Our Lady of Peace, Santa Clara**
5:00PM and 7:30PM Vigil Masses with veneration

Sunday, November 2 2014 **Saint Bruno Church, San Bruno**
8AM, 10AM, 12Noon and 6PM masses with veneration