

Let us first look at the Gospel which has been often misunderstood for 2,000 years. In the first place, there were those in the early centuries who used this text to “prove” that Jesus wasn’t really both human and divine since he appears to deny his mother. And in the past few centuries, there are many who would use this to likewise deny the role of the Mother of God.

Yet, from the earliest centuries, this text was seen — not as a denial of Mary, but rather as Christ emphasizing what he had already taught. Saint Ambrose says:

*The Son of God, about to publish the precept that he who does not leave father and mother is unworthy of His discipleship, is Himself the first to consummate the sacrifice ... [in this] He acknowledges a debt to His Father’s ministry even greater than to His mother’s love ... to teach us that spiritual bonds are of holier sort than fleshly.*

And then quotes Tertullian

*He denied his parents then in the sense in which He taught us to deny ours — for God’s sake.*

Which leads us to the Saint of the Day, St. Lawrence of Brindisi — a Capuchin Friar, and a Doctor of the Church ... one of four Franciscans who are recognized as ‘doctors,’ and the *only* Capuchin.

Saint Lawrence wrote fifteen volumes on Theology, and published 84 sermons on the Blessed Virgin Mary. In his first sermon, he quotes Saint Bernard of Clairvaux regarding the three great miracles: “*God and Man, this is the first: Mother and Virgin, this the second: faith and the human heart, this is the third.*”

Saint Lawrence is known for his great love for both the Eucharist and Our Lady. He would often take two or three hours to offer the Mass — and in fact received permission to take his time in praying the Holy Mass ... so that on the last Christmas of his life, his Mass lasted 16 hours.

Let us pray for the an increase of Faith, Hope and Love; so that we might believe more deeply, have a stronger desire to do God’s Will, and have a greater love for our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ. May we have the courage to follow Him more closely and freely make the sacrifices He calls us to make for His sake, and the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Saint Lawrence of Brindisi: pray for us.