



Bishop and Founder of the Dominican Sisters of Bethany.

Roman Martyrology: Dominican. Ordained in 1863. Founded the Dominican Sisters of Bethany in 1867.

Beatification Date: June 3, 2012 at Besancon by The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Lataste was born as Alcide Lataste on the 5th of September, 1832 in Cadillac. He was the youngest of seven children. While his mother was a Christian, his father was a freethinker. He was baptized the next day after his birth and his elder sister, Rosy was his godmother. As a child, he was miraculously healed from a serious illness and he attributes this to the personage of the Blessed Virgin.

He studied at the minor seminary of Bordeaux where he made his first communion and confirmation. There he met Henri Lacordaire for the first time. Although he had the desire for the priesthood, he never thought himself worthy. He went ahead to study in the secular college but kept his desire alive with the support of his sister, Rosy who was already in the convent. He graduated in 1850 and returned to his hometown. He stayed with his parents for a year and devoted his time to reading and writing poetry. He worked in the public service between 1851 and 1857.

While he was working, he was an active member of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. This helped him to nurture his desire for the religious life. After much reflection, he finally entered the Dominican Novitiate at Flavigny in November 1857. He became seriously ill again and this delayed his profession. After his cure, he made his profession in the presence of his father and two brothers and was sent to Toulouse for his studies. He lived at the Convent of Chalais, Grenoble and St Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume where he became acquainted with Mary Magadalen through deep contemplation. On the 10th of May 1862, he made solemn profession and on the 8th of February, 1863, he was ordained to the priesthood in Marseille by Bishop Petagna. He did more studies and was finally assigned to the convent of Bordeaux. His priestly ministry was characterized by inspirational sermons, retreats, confessions, mortifications and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

The Sisters of Bethany

He first learnt of the plight of women prisoners at Pyrenees and never had direct contact with them until the meeting with inmates of Cadillac in September 1864. This meeting which was inspired by his strong devotion to Mary Magdalene led to the foundation of Bethany. He had a retreat for the inmates who were serving different sentences for various crimes and he sensed their deep repentance and faith. These were enough for him to start a religious congregation.

As the women were regaining their freedom, Fr Lataste offered them the opportunity of consecrating their lives to God in religious vows. They were to be member of the Dominican Order, wearing same habit like Dominican Sisters with nothing to distinguish them. With the assistance of Mother Dominique-Henri of the Sisters of the Presentation, Tours, Fr Lataste started the Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of Bethany in 1866. The congregation now exist in different parts of the world.

His Death

Fr. Lataste became ill again in 1868. This time, it was so serious that he had to orally dictate the constitutions of the Sisters of Bethany to Mother Dominique-Henri. This was later completed by Fr Baker after his death. He died on the 10th of March 1869 with deep love for his sisters and gratitude to God. He was initially buried at the sisters' convent at Frasn -le-Chateau. His body was however translated when his sisters moved to a new convent at Montferrand-le-Chateau. He was again translated to the sisters' chapel when the cause of his beatification was opened.

After a long investigation, the claim of his beatification was formerly recognized on the 3rd of June, 2012 at Besancon by The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI.