



**Roman martyrology:** In Algiers, capital of Algeria, Blessed Francesco Zirano professed priest of the Order of Friars Minor Convent, killed by the hatred of the faith. (1603).

**Beatification date:** October 12, 2014 by Pope Francis.

### **SHORT BIOGRAPHY**

Born c.1564 in Sassari, Italy. Member of the Friars Minor Conventuals, making his profession in 1580. Priest, ordained in 1586. In 1599 he received authorization from Pope Clement VIII to collect funds to ransom Christians who were enslaved and held for ransom by Muslims in North Africa. On 20 August 1602 he arrived in Algiers, Algeria where anti-Christian sentiment was building due to an impending war between Algiers and the kingdom of Cuco; Cuco had the backing of Catholic Spain.

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1603, following a battle won by the king of Cuco, Father Francesco was dispatched to the Spanish court to take back news; he was betrayed to local Algerian soldiers who captured him and sent him to Algiers in chains. On the morning of 25 January 1603 he received notice that he was condemned to death for being a Christian, but could receive a pardon if he converted to Islam; he declined. Martyr.

He was flayed alive on January 25, 1603 in Algiers, Algeria.