



In a message for the 450th anniversary of the death of St. Stanislaus Kostka, Pope Francis invites young people to run the race towards holiness and to dream of finding true happiness in Jesus.

Pope Francis sent a message on Wednesday to mark the 450th anniversary of the death of St. Stanislaus Kostka.

The Polish saint died on August 15, 1568 in Rome, while he was a novice (seminarian) of the Society of Jesus. St. Stanislaus died at the age of 17, and is a patron of Jesuit novices, students, and Poland.

Celebrations of St. Stanislaus

Pope Francis sent his greetings to Bishop Piotr Libero of Płock, the saint's birthplace.

He called St. Stanislaus Kostka “one of the most excellent sons of your homeland and of the Society of Jesus.”

The Holy Father spoke in his letter to the young people of Poland attending celebrations in Rostkowo. “You too are driven by the love of Christ and renewed in strength by His grace. Be courageous!”

Great cross-country race

Pope Francis recalled the words of Pope St. John Paul II when praying at the saint's tomb in the Church of St. Andrew on the Quirinal Hill in Rome.

“The path of his brief life – begun at Rostkowo in Mazowsze, passing through Vienna and all the way to Rome – can be likened to a great cross-country race towards holiness, which is the goal of every Christian life.”

Pope Francis said St. Stanislaus teaches young people that freedom is not a blind race, but “the capacity to discern the desired goal and follow the best paths of action and life.”

St. Stanislaus, the Pope said, teaches them “not to be afraid to take risks and to dream of true happiness, which comes from Jesus Christ.”

Finally, Pope Francis reminded the young people of Poland of St. Stanislaus Kostka’s motto and invited them to live by it. “Ad maiora natus sum: I was born for greater things.”