

The Universal Call to Holiness in the Church

“Thus it is evident to everyone that all the faithful of Christ, of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; by this holiness, as such, a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society. In order that the faithful may reach this perfection, they must use their strength accordingly as they have received it, as a gift from Christ. They must follow in His footsteps and conform themselves to His image, seeking the will of the Father in all things. They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor. In this way, the holiness of the People of God will grow into an abundant harvest of good, as is admirably shown by the life of so many saints in Church history.” (Lumen Gentium, p. 40)



Pamphlet Resources:

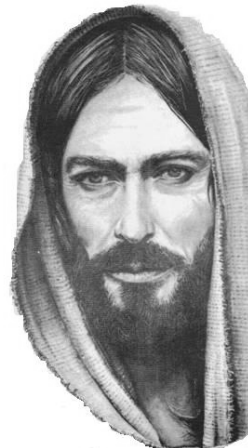
Americancatholic.org

Oxfordoratory.org

St.thomasirondequoit.com/SaintsAlive

Blessed Anthony Grassi,

Being struck by lightning only deepened your faith, and made it burn brighter for Christ. Help us all to be such a serene, glowing force that others will want to come to know the love of God that sustains us. Bring us to the feet of Jesus in reconciliation, and pray for us to never leave the path that leads to Him. AMEN!



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**Evangelization and the Lives
of the Saints**

Blessed Anthony Grassi
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To be struck by lightning would surely be a dramatic turning point in most people's lives. Certainly it would cause one to rethink one's life—its purpose and its values. Such was the experience of Blessed Anthony Grassi, when, as a 29 year-old priest, he was struck down as he knelt praying in the shrine of Our Lady of Loreto, to whom he had a strong devotion. He was temporarily paralyzed, and his clothing was completely scorched. He later said, "I made the discovery that if we believe death to be close at hand we become quite indifferent to the world and know all earthly things to be emptiness." After this incident he was completely convinced that his life belonged entirely to God.

Anthony Grassi was born in 1592, but sadly his father, who was a strong spiritual influence in his life, died when the boy was only ten. He entered the seminary for the Oratorian Fathers, founded by St. Philip Neri, when he was 17 and was ordained several years later.

Father Anthony was known for his quick mind and his spiritual gifts. Among these was the gift of being an outstanding confessor, as it was said he could often read people's

consciences. It was not unusual for him to spend five or six hours in the confessional. He truly loved to comfort people and set them again on the path towards God.

Blessed Anthony Grassi was elected superior of the Oratorian Fathers in 1635. He had a quiet spirituality which permeated his life. He literally disliked loud noises, once reprimanding another priest, "If you please, Father, only a few inches of voice!". He was known to be serene and gentle as a superior. In Father Anthony's case being struck by lightning kept him grounded!

- Celebrate Blessed Anthony's love of the Sacrament of Reconciliation by making a good and sincere confession. Advent is a wonderful time to "sweep out the corners and clean house" for the coming of the infant Jesus. Let us all ask ourselves, in the quietness of our hearts, how we can turn back to God in this season so rich in grace.
- Serenity is a gift which can be cultivated. In these times and this month of frantic activity, slowing down is something everyone needs to do. Why not make a "Blessed Anthony Grassi Serenity Hour" with prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, or try to make the sacrifice of one hour per day in prayer during the month of December. Find a prayerful spot in your home in which to create a serene environment: lit candles, sacred art, a Bible and a comfortable chair.
- It was said of Blessed Anthony Grassi that "he had a God-given awareness of the future, a gift which he frequently used to warn or to console" (American Catholic, Saint of the Day). While not

many of us can foretell the future, we can all be more aware of what future events our current actions might affect. Can we mend a torn friendship by being more forgiving? Can we help change the world one person at a time by sharing our faith with someone? Can we reach out with a prayer or small donation for the poor and helpless? Let us all resolve to make the future a little better by our actions each day.

- Father Anthony suffered near the end of his life from various ailments which, while common among the aged, humiliated him because they forced him to stop the things he loved the most. He lost his teeth and could no longer preach; that, along with hearing loss, prevented his hearing confessions. Finally, a fall confined him to his room. Still, through it all he remained faithful through prayer. He struggled through his physical ailments but kept his heart focused on Christ. There are many aging and homebound within our parishes who could use even a small reminder about God's love for them. A spiritual card, a phone call or a visit would brighten their day and give them the hope to continue in faith and prayer. Remind parishioners via the bulletin to remember the aging during this season of love, and all year round.

Certainly Blessed Anthony Grassi's life had a profound influence on those he came in contact with. He was able to win people for Christ by his peaceful countenance, which was fed by his strong inner convictions and faith. May we all strive to be a quiet, yet brightly burning, light for Christ.