

St. Martin de Porres

St. Martin de Porres was born Dec. 9, 1579, in Lima, Peru. He became a servant in a Dominican priory in Lima when he was just 11. When he served as the almoner (one who distributes alms), he begged from the rich to help the ill and poor in the city. He also cared for the sick in the infirmary. He took vows as a Dominican brother in 1603; before St. Martin, the Dominicans had a stipulation that black men could not take vows. This saint set up an orphanage and children's hospital for poor children. He also nursed stray cats and dogs in a shelter he started. He died Nov. 3, 1639, of a fever in Lima. St. Martin de Porres is patron saint of black people, public education and poor people.