



ST. JEROME EMILIANI

(Venice 1486 – Somasca 1537)

A Saint

Jerome Emiliani lived during the time of the counter-reformation. He was a layman who lived the fullness of his life and accomplished here on earth Jesus' command to be holy. In a prayer that he taught to his disciples, he shows his concern that the Church return to the holiness of the Apostolic time (Acts 4:32-35). He could contemplate the countenance of the Father in the Crucified Christ (cf. Jn. 14:10), whom he addressed as, "Our sweet Father, Lord Jesus Christ". In 1767, *Pope Clement XIII* proclaimed him a Saint.

A Founder

Jerome Emiliani's intense spiritual life and dedication to the works of mercy for the reformation of the Church drew many to follow his example. He gathered them together in Somasca in 1535, and called them, "The Company of the Servants of the Poor". Over the years, they became popularly known as, the Fathers from Somasca, hence, the *Somascan Fathers*. In 1568, *Pope St. Pius V* approved the new community as the "Ordo Clericorum Regularium a Somascha" (C.R.S.).

A Patron Saint

Jerome Emiliani worked with the orphans in an innovative way. In 1928, *Pope Pius XI* proclaimed him the "Universal Patron of Orphans and Abandoned Youth," a title that echoes God's sublime designation: "Father of Orphans and defender of the widows is God in his high abode" (Ps. 68:6).



THE SOMASCAN FATHERS

The Somascans in the World

The *Somascan Fathers* number about 500 worldwide, and operate in 20 countries in all continents. While well over fifty percent of our activities are in serving orphans and needy youth, including in education activities, we are present in parish ministry as well.

The Somascans in the USA

In the U.S.A. since 1960, the *Somascans* conduct *Pine Haven Boys Center* – a Residential Treatment Center for Emotionally Handicapped Boys – in Suncook, New Hampshire. In Houston we staff Assumption and Christ the King Parishes, as well the House for Initial Formation. We form a group of ten religious: eight Italians, one originally from Mexico and one from India.

The Somascans in Houston

The *Somascans* came to *Assumption Parish* in Houston in 1989. In 2000, our community decided to begin a more assertive vocational activity. Thanks to the benevolence of Archbishop Fiorenza, we also assumed the pastoral guide of *Christ the King Parish*. Both parishes serve a population of older members of Italian (Sicilian), Polish and Czech ancestry, and a very large Hispanic membership, such that today, about two thirds of the Sunday masses are celebrated in the Spanish language.



At Christ the King we use the former convent as our house of initial formation (Pre-postulancy and Postulancy). About 12 young men have passed through the house. Two have become priests: Fr. Romualdo, currently assigned as parochial vicar at Assumption, and Fr. Pablo, currently ministering in Italy.

One religious, Ivan, has finished theology at the Gregorian University in Rome, and is doing his two-year practicum in New Hampshire. Another simple vow young man, David, has just started philosophy in Rome.