

Toribio de Mongrovejo (1538-1606)

Observed 23 August



Turibius of Mongrovejo or Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo shares a feast day with the better known Martin de Porres and Rosa of Lima. All three individuals demonstrate the holiness and faith that flourished in the Spanish colonies despite the excesses and abuse of many of the conquistadores and those who followed them. Toribio was a highly educated Spanish nobleman, who had an outstanding career in the law before he was ordained a priest at age 40 and sent to the colony of Peru, where he was quickly named archbishop. His academic and legal careers had demonstrated such personal virtue and integrity, such personal piety and strength of character that he was known and admired throughout Spain. So when word came of the need for a new leader to sort out the corruption and abuses in the Peruvian colony, the King immediately thought of him, despite his lack of ecclesiastical credentials – and his choice was widely applauded. From his first arrival in the colony, Toribio endeared himself to the people by traveling throughout the territory on foot, everywhere baptizing any who wished it and generally ministering to the needs he found. He was obviously concerned to improve the lives of the people in every way possible and so oversaw the building of roads and schools and churches all over. Unlike many colonial authorities he saw the local people as fully human. He not only welcomed them into the community of faith, he also stood up to the civil and military authorities on behalf of his

native flock, seeking always to assert and protect their rights. For 26 years he served his flock as a faithful shepherd, called by God out of his chosen profession and homeland into a totally unexpected life.

Lessons Sirach 7:32-36; Psalm 9:9-14; James 2:1-8,14-17; Mark 10:23-30

Collect Merciful God, you sent your Gospel to the people of Peru through Martin de Porres, who brought its comfort even to slaves; through Rosa de Lima, who worked among the poorest of the poor; and through Toribio de Mogrovejo, who founded the first seminary in the Americas and baptized many: Help us to follow their example in bringing fearlessly the comfort of your grace to all downtrodden and outcast people, that your Church may be renewed with songs of salvation and praise; through Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. Amen.