

Lunette B10

BLESSED ANTONIO OF SAINT ANNA

INSCRIPTION:

HIGHLY ESTEEMED BLESSED ANTONIO OF SAINT ANNA, A LAYMAN, THE FLOWER OF CHASTITY, WAS TEMPTED BY BEAUTIFUL MAIDENS SENT BY BARBARIAN INFIDELS. AS HE RESISTED THEIR INSULTS WITH A FEARLESS SPIRIT, HE WAS SEVERELY PIERCED BY THEM WITH SWORDS, ARROWS, DAGGERS, AND STILETTOS. HIS BODY WAS THROWN INTO THE WATER, HIS HEAD SEVERED, AND MIRACULOUSLY HIS BODY WAS SEEN FLOATING AGAIN. THIS HAPPENED IN THE YEAR 1610.

Blessed Antonio of Saint Anna was born in Spain in Garrovillas, in Extremadura. At a very young age, he took the Franciscan habit as a layman and after a few years, he set out on a mission. He was captured and in an underground prison in Tagolandia, in the Moluccas Islands, he awaited death very serenely, fasting and praying.

His persecutors, meanwhile, prepared the most shameful and violent martyrdom they could devise. On the appointed day, they handed him over with his hands tied to a group of women. In front of the entire populace, these women led him to a beach and began to dance and sing to the rhythm of tambourine music. They provoked him, bit him, beat him, and tortured him with various instruments. After four hours, they lynched him while he continued to look to the sky and pray, thanking the Lord for deeming him worthy of martyrdom.

Finally, a Moor beheaded him with a scimitar. It was the year 1610. The miracles of the martyr continued for a long time even after his death. Brother Giuseppe depicts the frenzied dance of young women, including a jeweled lady ready to strike with a stiletto and a black woman playing the tambourine. Generally, in the frescoes, slaves or freedmen of African origin are portrayed with black skin. A beam of sunlight, symbolically alluding to the presence of God, shines down on the martyr from above. The sense of powerlessness is rendered by his nearly naked and immobilized body, his hands tied behind his back, and a rope binding his neck to the trunk of a tree.



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