

SAINT DAMIEN OF MOLOKAI

One day Fr. Damien heard about a colony at Molokai, where lepers were exiled to. It was a harsh and lawless place.

Who would like to go to the leper colony on Molokai?

I will go. I will be their priest.

The leper colony was poorly maintained. People needed treatment but had no one to care for them. There was also total absence of law and order.

Fr. Damien got to work right away. He restored order and took care of the lepers, winning their trust and respect.

Thank you, Father. You are kind and good to us.

Come to Mass and pray.

The little church was full of people. They needed a choir and music, too so Fr. Damien started a choir!

For sixteen years, Fr. Damien lived and worked with the Molokai lepers. He helped build schools and orphanages, and also helped families build new homes. Volunteers came to help them. Molokai became a better place to live.

Then one day Fr. Damien discovered that he had leprosy, too. But he continued to work and derived strength from prayer.

It is at the foot of the altar that we find the strength we need in our isolation.

Fr. Damien got weaker each day. Finally he was bed-ridden.

Fr. Damien died of leprosy on 15 April 1889, aged 49. After his death, many people heard of his work. More volunteers went to Molokai.

Take care of my people. I will pray for you in heaven.

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