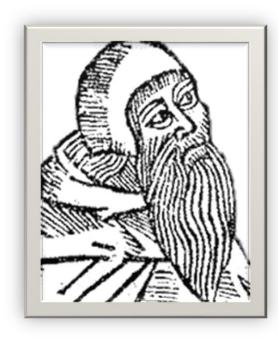# Blessed Raymond Lull

Feast Day – June 30

Blessed Raymond belonged to the noble Lull family and was born at Palma on the island of Mallorca in 1236. At a very early age he became a page at the royal court; and before he was 30 years old he had been advanced to the position of marshal and high steward to King James of Mallorca.

For several years Blessed Raymond Lull followed the lead of other courtiers, serving the world and vanity. But God in His mercy soon led him along a better path. On the feast of St Francis he heard a bishop portray in vivid terms the contempt of the world and the love of Christ with which the Poverello was imbued. For some time past Raymond had perceived in himself the desire for nobler things than human honors. He recognized in the bishop's sermon the call of God to forsake all things and to win for Christ the infidels on the northern coast of Africa.

Without hesitation Blessed Raymond followed the call. He resigned his offices, left the royal court, and founded a college in which missionaries, particularly those who belonged to the Order of Friars Minor, should receive the necessary training in the languages of northern Africa. He himself joined the Third Order of St Francis, and for nine years retired to the solitude of Mt Randa in order to prepare himself by prayer and study. God favored him with much heavenly inspiration and granted him extraordinary knowledge so that, in spite of his numerous undertakings he was able to write admirable things about the most difficult questions in philosophy and theology.

Raymond then made long journeys to Rome, Avignon, Montipellier, Paris, and Vienne, in order to interest the Holy Father and the various potentates in the work of conversion and the founding of seminaries for missionaries.

In 1314, at the age of 79, he himself undertook a missionary expedition to Africa. It was destined to be his last journey. While preaching the Faith of Christ in the public square at Bougie, a group of fanatical Mussulmans seized him and stoned him. He was bleeding from countless wounds and left for dead in the market place. Genoese merchants took him aboard their ship in order to give him burial in his own country.

During the voyage Raymond regained consciousness for a time, but when the ship arrived near Mallorca, he breathed his last. A very great concourse of people gathered for his burial in the Franciscan church at Palma in Mallorca where he had joined the Third Order. Soon miracles were reported as occurring at the grave of the glorious martyr. Pope Leo X beatified him, and Mallorca chose Blessed Raymond Lull as its special patron.