



SANTO: SAN YSIDRO LABRADOR

San Isidore the Laborer is the patron saint of farmers, farm workers, and farm animals. Born to very poor parents near Madrid in 1070, his original name was Isidro de Merlo y Quintana. He grew to be very tall, nearly six and a half feet in height, and went to work on an estate outside Madrid at an early age. He was known to be very pious and attended mass each day before going to the fields. He was kind and generous to both the animals with whom he worked and to the poor whom he met every day. He died in 1130 and was canonized in 1622 with four others from Spain. On the Iberian Peninsula they are known as the "Spanish Five." The story of San Isidore the Laborer is a reminder of the dignity of work and that ordinary life can lead to holiness.

In the Western Hemisphere, San Ysidro (the Spanish version of his name) is often portrayed as a peasant or farmer with a broad-brimmed hat, holding a staff or sickle and a sheaf of corn. An angel guiding a plow pulled by two oxen usually accompanies him.