

Clerics Regular of Somasca

FROM SOMASCA TO THE WORLD



***Discerning your Vocation
with the Somascans***

SAINT JEROME EMILIANI

St. Jerome Emiliani (Miani) was born in 1486, Venice, Italy, in a noble family. Despite the wealth and fame, his childhood was heavily marked by the tragic death of his father. As a young man, Jerome went astray from the sound Christian principles, partly due to his military career. However, his mother Eleanor's constant prayer and example of pious life was not without its own impact on his life.

At the age of 25, he was appointed governor of a stronghold that was standing on the Alps to defend the Venetian territory. In an encounter with the Germans, Jerome was captured and was imprisoned in a dungeon. As no one came forward to ransom him, He felt abandoned by everyone; his dreams shattered and left with no other option, he turned his eyes towards God, obviously reminded of his mother's example. He was miraculously liberated from the prison through the intervention of the Blessed Virgin Mary and this experience marked the beginning of his conversion journey.

The terrible pestilence of 1528 in the northern part of Italy served as an impulse to devote his life to the care of those who were orphaned and abandoned. He became a caring father of orphans. Hearing of his humanitarian accomplishments and his exemplary Christian life style, many people of good will- both laymen and priests- were attracted to join him. This was the beginning of "the Company of the Servants of the Poor", now known as the "Congregation of the Somascan Fathers"

His liturgical feast is celebrated on the 8th of February, the day he returned to the Fathers House. In 1920, the Church proclaimed him "father of Orphans and universal patron of needy youth". The followers of St. Jerome, the Somascans, are currently present in 21 countries across five continents, serving the Church in various ways, especially by reflecting the fatherhood of God to orphans and needy youth.



The Somascans are in the Following Countries:

- Europe: Italy, Spain, Poland, Romania, Albania;
- Americas: USA, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Santo Domingo;
- Asia: The Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Australia;
- Africa: Mozambique and Nigeria



Through calamities and difficulties of any kind that have developed during the four centuries of history the Somascan Order has never ceased its apostolate for the needy youth. St Jerome has now on earth those numerous hands and arms of which he has dreamed.

SOMASCAN APOSTOLATES

Today the Spirit of Saint Jerome lives on in the life and witness of the Somascan Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and lay associates. Their zeal for the love of God is expressed in many and varied ways by sharing the paternal love of the Father with all those they come in contact with, especially those that are abandoned or outcast.

The apostolate includes but is not limited to:

- Care of orphans
- The poor and disadvantaged
- Youth at risk
- Youth formation
- Rehabilitation programs
- Education
- Pastoral Care
- Spiritual Guidance
- Foreign Missions



Somascans work together in collaboration with all who share the common goal of advancing God's Kingdom on earth. Therefore, in order to effectively carry out the apostolate many work in various contexts and settings, from group homes, treatment and rehabilitation centers to retreat houses, schools, youth centers and parishes. Whatever the apostolate, the love of God and His paternal love for his children is always at the center of every Somascan initiative.

VOCATIONAL INQUIRY AND INITIAL FORMATION

INITIAL FORMATION PROGRAM - In summoning disciples to share fellowship and mission in His company, Jesus invited them to “come and see,” (see John 1:39). The Church has entrusted the Order of the Somascan Fathers with the important mission of proclaiming to the world that God is Our Father, through his Son Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, and the example of Saint Jerome Emiliani, Universal Patron Saint of the Orphans. In order that others may share in this Apostolic mission, our Order continually welcomes new members. Formation progressively and gradually introduces the individual to our life of prayer, fraternity, and service centered on teaching and healing. Our formation/education program is divided into three Stages leading to final vows and/or ordination to the priesthood.

STAGE 1: PRE-NOVITIATE - Focus: Discovering the Call (Vocation)

COME AND SEE: The “Come and See” Phase at Somasca Hall is an opportunity that the Somascan Fathers offer to those interested in finding out their Christian vocation. **POSTULANCY:** This phase provides the opportunity for a more profound understanding of Christ, His Church, and a first initiation in the Order’s spirituality.

STAGE 2: NOVITIATE - Focus: Discovering the Mission of the Order of the Somascan Fathers and Vowed Religious Life

The Novitiate is a time apart from the usual pattern of one’s life and involvements so that the dimensions of the vocation and mission are explored and integrated.

STAGE 3: POST-NOVITIATE (Philosophy and Theology) Focus: Discovering and preparing for the Mission within the Order of the Somascan Fathers.

This step is a time of formal study and continued formation in our spirituality and prayer, community life, and ecclesial ministry leading to final vows and/or priestly ordination: Our seminarians could join our community in Rome (Italy) and are formed for the priesthood according to the requirements of Canon Law and the program of studies offered by many Vatican Universities in Rome.

AUSTRALIAN SOMASCANS IN FORMATION

After reading the story of St. Jerome Emiliani, who would have known 500 years on the other side of the world that his mission would still be present in the land down under, Australia! Since 2004, the Somascan Father have been present in Australia and there seems like no signs of stopping, a hopeful sign for the world in desperate need of the Paternal Love of God the Father! My name is Br. Sheldon Burke, a temporarily professed Brother and Perth local currently studying Philosophy in Rome in my formation towards becoming a Somascan Father. The journey so far has been more than I could have ever imagined. People told me I'd be "giving up so much by joining the religious life", but instead God has only given more than I could have ever imagined and expected. Serving the poor, meeting people from all over the world, living the religious life to the full and studying in the heart of our Catholic faith are only some of the blessings amongst a multitude. I hope that in my little-ness, that we (the Somascan Fathers and the Somascan Movement Australia) can continue to follow in the foots steps of St. Jerome Emiliani and reform the church, first by reforming ourselves by living sacramentally, beings Christians radically and loving unconditionally!

Bro Sheldon Burke CRS





The Somaskan Father's arrived at my parish of St Jerome's Munster while I was a law student at university, juggling the practice of my faith along with studies, part-time work, family and a pretty active social life. These new missionary priests to Australia immediately inspired me by how quickly my parish community flourished into one big family under their joyful paternity, a paternity that helped me understand more and more the love of God Our Father.

Following an invitation from the Somaskan Father's to help them in their ministry, on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary in 2005 we established a Somaskan Youth Group that continues today and has also expanded into a movement for both youth and adults. Having been led Providentially by hand through the blessings of seven years in youth ministry, over five years of work as a Perth and Sydney lawyer and international travel to nearly twenty countries around the world, I was guided to the greatest blessing of all: my vocation as a religious priest within the Order of Clerics Regular of Somasca.

In these last six years, I've been based predominately in Italy for my religious formation and studies towards the priesthood and grace-filled missionary experiences in our Somaskan orphanages in India and Sri Lanka in this past year. Please pray for me as I now prepare for my solemn profession of religious vows and ordinations to the diaconate and priesthood. God love you and Our Lady keep you!

Bro Chris De Sousa CRS



**SOMASCAN
MOVEMENT**
— AUSTRALIA —

If you would like to get to know us better or are interested in deepening your faith or discerning your vocation please feel free to contact us for guidance or spiritual direction.

Website:

*www.somascans.org.au
www.stjeromesparish.org
www.olol.kolbe.wa.edu.au*

Parishes:

*St Jerome's Spearwood WA
Our Lady of Lourdes Rockingham WA*