

# St. Blaise

Feast Day: February 3

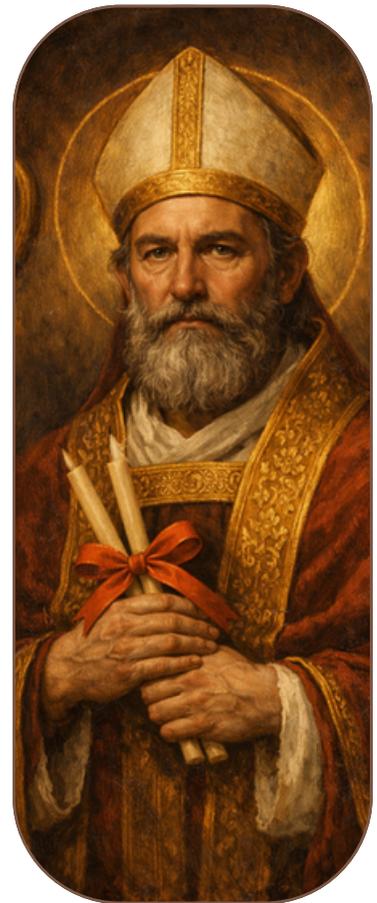
Patron Saint of Throat Illnesses, Animals, Wool Combers, and Wool Trading

St. Blaise was a bishop, physician, and martyr of the early Church, honored for his steadfast faith and his powerful intercession for the sick, especially those suffering from ailments of the throat. He served as Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia (modern-day Sivas, Turkey) during the late third and early fourth centuries, a time when Christians faced fierce persecution under Roman rule, particularly during the reign of Emperor Licinius.

According to long-standing tradition, Blaise was trained as a physician before becoming a bishop, a background that shaped his lifelong concern for healing both body and soul. As a shepherd of his people, he was known for his holiness, humility, and devotion to prayer. At times, he withdrew to live as a hermit in a cave, dedicating himself to contemplation, while still providing guidance and care to the faithful who sought him out. Tradition also holds that wild animals gathered peacefully around him and that he cared for them gently, reflecting the harmony of creation restored through holiness.

During the persecution of Christians, St. Blaise was arrested for refusing to renounce his faith in Christ. While imprisoned, he performed the miracle for which he is best known: saving a young boy who was choking on a fishbone after the child's mother begged for his prayers. This event led to the Church's enduring custom of the Blessing of the Throats, celebrated each year on his feast day, February 3.

St. Blaise endured severe torture, including scourging with iron combs used for carding wool, before ultimately being beheaded. He accepted his suffering with unwavering trust in Christ, offering his life as a witness to the Gospel. Today, Catholics venerate St. Blaise as a martyr, healer, and faithful bishop, confidently seeking his intercession for protection, healing, and perseverance in faith.



## *Did You Know?*

One of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, St. Blaise became among the most widely venerated saints of the Middle Ages. Though little honored in the West before the 8th century, devotion to him spread rapidly across Europe in the 11th and 12th centuries. His legend appears in the *Legenda Aurea*, and he is revered as the saint of wild animals.