

OCTOBER 31
SAINT ALPHONSUS RODRÍGUEZ
RELIGIOUS
MEMORIAL

St. Alphonsus was born at Segovia in Spain in 1533, became a merchant after his father's premature death, and in 1560 or thereabouts he married. After the death of his wife and children he entered the Society as a Brother in 1571 and was sent in the same year to Palma in Majorca, where he filled the office of porter in the college of the Society there until his death. He was tested by a prolonged spiritual struggle and was also distinguished by the possession of great charisms from God. He died at Palma in 1617 and was canonized by Leo XIII in 1888.

From the Common of Men Saints, for Religious

THE OFFICE OF READINGS

Second Reading

From the spiritual writings of St. Alphonsus Rodríguez,
Religious

(Account of conscience, June 1615; Spanish text in V. Segarra, S.J., *San Alonso Rodríguez. Autobiografía o sea Memorial o Cuentas de la Consciencia*, Barcelona, 1956, pp. 227-228. English translation [slightly adapted], W. Yeomans, S.J., *St. Alphonsus Rodríguez: Autobiography*, G. Chapman, London, 1964, p. 242.)

*Like a baby at the breast with its mother, he does not
know how to be presumptuous.*

It so happens that frequently all this person's business and conversation are with Jesus and the Virgin his most holy Mother, the loves of my soul, and I give them an account of what happens to me. For I really am such a nothing, and coarse and ignorant, that I am good for

nothing. And I have recourse to them, giving them an account of what happens to me, asking them to help me and to be favorable to me, so that everything may be done according to their pleasure and not in any other way. For my heart is full of longings and desires to please God, because of the great love I have for him, by breaking with myself and all my concerns in this life, even with my own self, in order to please God. And because he sees my good desires, and I speak with him and the Virgin, and I want only them and what they want, putting myself and all my own and other people's affairs entirely into their hands, so everything comes out well and according to God. In dealing with Jesus and Mary I go along with holy fear as I speak with them, and they answer me with gentle sweetness and teach me, by letting me know their holy will so that I can carry it out. In this sweet familiarity with God and with the Virgin this person's attitude is that of a baby at the breast with its mother; he does not know how to be presumptuous not is he able to be, because he is a baby. In this conversation the soul reaches the state, by the grace of God, where it does not know how to be—nor even can be—presumptuous, any more than a baby at the breast.

Responsory (Ps. 85:12-13; Ps. 117:28)

R. I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart and glorify your name for ever; for your love to me has been great.

V. You are my God, I thank you. My God, I praise you; for

Concluding Prayer

Lord our God, in St. Alphonsus, our brother, you have shown us the way of fidelity that leads to joy and peace. May we remain watchful and attentive as companions of Jesus, who became the servant of all, and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.