

## A History of the Five Franciscan Martyrs

The cause for the beatification of these **1597** Franciscan martyrs is in the Roman Phase. The Franciscans and the Diocese of Savannah are promoting this cause, Fray Pedro de Corpa and Companions.

**Names:**

- Fr. Pedro de Corpa, OFM** (Convent of Astorga)
- Fr. Blas Rodríguez, OFM** (Province of San Gabriel)
- Fr. Miguel de Auñon, OFM** (Zaragoza, Convent of Vitoria)
- Brother Antonio de Badajóz, OFM** (Province of San Gabriel)
- Fr. Francisco de Veráscola, OFM** (Convent of Valladolid)

**Date:** September 1597

**Place:** Guale (Golden Isles of Georgia and coast)

The sons of St. Francis came to Florida in 1573. These Franciscans embraced the poverty modeled by their founder and began to live in native villages where invited. In the fall of 1597, a few native Christian leaders led a revolt against the Franciscan missionaries, killing four priests and one brother. The revolt was fueled by a rejection of the teaching against polygamy.

In a short time following the revolt, the native people began to ask for the Franciscans to return to them. The Franciscans were not able to keep up with the new requests for Baptism and requested more friars.

“Missions which are being carried with great determination by the poor friars of the Order of Saint Francis on their bony skinny shoulders, and this they do because it is all from God and it is what nourishes the human strength of them who are men of consecrated souls and hands. However, these friars are not content using their hands only to bless, they also work for God Our Lord, and with same hands that by making on the air the sign of the cross bless and heal souls, they plant the land and build churches as well.”

These Franciscan proto-martyrs were remembered and honored through the many generations of Christianity that followed in early Florida.