

Iconography of St Anthony includes a series of symbols: youth, the habit, a book, the baby Jesus, the lily, a flame, a heart, bread. These express either a characteristic of his personality or the gifts and qualities which popular devotion have attributed to him.

The most popular image is of Anthony as a young religious, with the Christ child in his arms and a lily in his hand.

Youth is connected to the ideal image of him as, pure, good, receptive to everyone.

The **Franciscan habit** (brown or black) is reminiscent of the Franciscan Order, but with some particular characteristics. Some people think - wrongly - that he created his own order and they have problems connecting him to St. Francis.

The **baby Jesus** is reminiscent of the vision that Anthony had in Camposampiero. It also expresses his attachment to the humanity of Christ and his closeness to God.

The **Lily** represents his purity and his battle against the demon since childhood.

The **flame** indicates his love for God and his neighbor.

Bread is reminiscent of his charity to the poor. This image is connected with the charity "St. Anthony's bread for the poor", which is still operating. This is also connected with Saint Anthony's Charities, which spreads the solidarity of St. Anthony all over the world.

In the end, the oldest image and that which is nearest to reality is represented by the **book**, a symbol of his science, of his doctrine, of his preaching and of his teaching, always inspired by the book *par excellence*: the Bible.

Using the handout of holy card images of St. Anthony, do the following as a family:

Circle all the images of the lily that you see. How many did you find? _____

Put an X through each book you see. How many did you see? _____

How many brown Franciscan habits are there? _____ How many black? _____

How many pictures do not show the Child Jesus with St. Anthony? _____ How many do?

How many pictures show a flame? _____ Put a heart around the flame.

Which picture is your favorite? _____ Why?
