

Saint Agatha
(Virgin and Martyr)
5 February



About Saint Agatha

Saint Agatha is another martyr of the early Christian Church about whose life we know very few details. She was martyred in Catania in Sicily, probably during the persecution of Decius (250-253). According to legend, she was the daughter of a prominent family and very beautiful. Quintianus who was a Roman Senator wished to marry her, but Agatha refused, so he retaliated by putting her in a brothel. Despite, what Quintianus did, Agatha held onto her Christian faith. Quintianus then had her tortured by having her breast cut off. She eventually died in prison in 253.

She is the patron of the city of Catania and is invoked against the fire, earthquakes and eruptions of Mount Etna.

She is one the saints mentioned in the first Eucharistic Prayer (the Roman Canon). In recent times she has become the patron saint of those suffering breast cancer.

What can we learn from Saint Agatha?

When we are faced with important choices and the wrong way is the easy way out, it can be very tempting to go down that path.

Why Agatha said no to Quintianus we do not know. What we do know is that she held firm to Christ and her faith in him until the very end. In life we are often faced with making decisions that we do not wish to, but if we make the right choice, God will not abandon us. If we decide to go down the wrong path and things do not work out, we only have ourselves to blame. We need to turn back to the Lord.

Those of us who are parents and teachers are always a guiding force in children's lives. We must always be willing to show them the right way and the way that leads to Jesus. We must be positive examples and role models in their lives.

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Collect

May the Virgin Martyr Saint Agatha
implore your compassion for us, O Lord, we pray,
for she found favour with you
by the courage of her martyrdom
and the merit of her chastity.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

Luke 9:23-26

The Son of Man is destined to suffer grievously

Jesus said:

'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine,
let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me.
For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it;
but anyone who loses his life for my sake, that man will save it.
What gain, then, is it for a man to have won the whole world
and to have lost or ruined his very self?
For if anyone is ashamed of me and of my words,
of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his own glory
and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels.'

Antiphon

The Lamb who is at the centre of the throne
will lead them to the springs of the waters of life.

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Hymn for the Memorial of Saint Agatha

Saint Agatha, you remained firm
and from Christ you never strayed;
despite undergoing torture
and receiving the sword's blade.

As a virgin and a martyr,
to Christ you gave testament;
daily living out the Gospel
and in Christ you were content.

As a follower of Jesus,
the Cross became part of life.
You renounced the things of this world,
even though it caused you strife.

Each day, O Lord, help us follow
and what you teach to proclaim;
that like Saint Agatha we may
witness to you without shame.

Text: 87.87 Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono
Tune: Stuttgart

Other Music Suggestion
[Lift High the Cross](#)

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