

Did you know . . .

Female Saints in the Canon of the Mass...Part 2

St. Lucy: St. Lucy was from Sicily. Like St. Agatha, she came from a noble lineage and vowed eternal chastity. St. Agatha appeared to St. Lucy when St. Lucy made a pilgrimage to Agatha's tomb. She asked St. Agatha to help restore her mother's help. After that vision, Lucy sold her property and gave the proceeds to the sick and poor.

St. Lucy was accused of being a Christian and had to appear before the tribunal of a heathen judge. She refused to make sacrifice to the pagan gods, replying, "It is a pure and undefiled worship of God to console and support widows and orphans in their tribulation...after offering my possessions, I shall gladly offer myself in sacrifice as well."

Many attempts to torture and kill her failed; death finally came when a sword was thrust through her neck. She continued to live until she received Holy Viaticum from a priest and then announced that peace was drawing near.

St. Anastasia. St. Anastasia was from Croatia. Called "the healer", she died in the Christian persecutions under the Emperor Diocletian. She was either a Sirmian native or a Roman citizen of patrician rank. Along with her husband Publius, she was tortured and eventually killed with 270 other men and women. Her commemoration falls on Christmas Day, which shows the high regard in which her cult was held.

St. Agnes. St. Agnes was from Rome. She was from a noble and wealthy family and admired for her grace, purity and innocence. She was condemned to death because of her refusal to marry the son of the Prefect Sempronius. Roman Law did not allow the execution of virgins, so Sempronius had St. Agnes stripped naked and brought to a brothel to be raped. It was said that all the men who tried to rape her became blind. She was finally stabbed or beheaded, stories vary. St. Agnes is the patron saint of girls, virgins, rape victims and chastity.

St. Cecilia. She, too, was from Rome and of nobility. Together with her husband Valerian, brother Tiburtius and a soldier, Maximus, she suffered martyrdom during the reign of Emperor Alexander Severus. Legend holds that she was beheaded while she was praising God, singing to Him as she was dying. She is the patron saint of musicians.

When the Church invokes these saints, she receives the prayers of powerful intercessors in Heaven. These saints remind us that we are a Church of martyrs, that the pathway to Heaven is cruciform. The cruciform life is *the life of Jesus taking shape in us.*

Holy Saints of the Roman Canon, pray for us!

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