

Reflection Thursday Week 2 St Agnes 2021

St Agnes (- 304). Our novena is offered to God through her intercession. As with many early Roman martyrs, very little is known about Agnes' life. Details about her have been obscured because of her martyrdom and the cult that it inspired, but, being martyred at the age of 12, her life was too short to acquire much detail. Agnes was filled with the love of God from an early age, vowed herself to celibacy, and when the opportunity of martyrdom arose, she stepped forward and embraced it. Although this is all that is known, it is enough. We would have found martyrdom at such a young age much, much more difficult. Let us admire the simple wisdom of Agnes, realise that there are moments where compromise and moral ambiguity will not do, and pray for the strength to respond to such moments positively when they happen.

St Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, reminds us that so often in history God chose the foolish and the weak to carry out his work: Ruth, Hannah, Miriam, in the Old Testament, and Bernadette of our own time. There are many others. A worldly mindset is often completely different to a spiritual mindset. In the Christian world weakness allows God to work much more effectively in and through us than if we believe ourselves to be strong. Agnes is but one example. The power of God always works for the good of others, for the common good. It is social status and money that give people worldly power often for their own benefit rather than for others. While worldly treasure has to do with personal status and wealth, God's power is about creating harmony, mutual support, dignity and honour for all, particularly for the poor. Let us thank St Agnes for reminding us of this.

My biggest weakness is probably indecisiveness I think...???

Interviewer to applicant: "What is your biggest weakness?"

Applicant: "Spiders."

Interviewer asks: "Professional ones?"

Applicant: "I don't know, I've never seen one in a suit before."

Interviewer: "What would your friends say are your weaknesses?"

Applicant: "I don't have any!"

Interviewer: "That can't be true. Everybody has some weak points."

Applicant: "Oh no. You misunderstood. I meant I don't have any friends."