

Reflection Friday Week 4 St Agatha 2021

St Agatha, also known as Agatha of Sicily, is one of the most highly venerated virgin martyrs of the Catholic Church. It is believed that she was born around 231 in either Catania or Palermo, Sicily to a rich and noble family. She consecrated her life to Christ but consequently faced much suffering and hardship, including imprisonment, to keep her vow. She is believed to have died in 251. Devotion to her was widespread in the Church in the earliest times and she is mentioned in the Roman Canon of the Mass.

Agatha stands before us as one who placed her complete trust in the Lord despite facing horrific ordeals. Her unwavering belief and courage defied every humiliation and atrocity thrown at her. In response to Jesus in the Gospel, Agatha took up her cross and its appalling suffering with a strength and courage we wish we had. When facing suffering of any kind, especially the unjust suffering because of what others have done, turn towards Saint Agatha for help. She signifies true selflessness, true self-giving. We would do well to ask her help in keeping the rules of Lockdown and not be instruments of spreading the virus, especially when it has not caused us any suffering.

Saint Agatha may well have inspired St Augustine of Hippo to say the following:

- If you are suffering from a bad person's injustice, forgive them—lest there be two bad people.
- Beauty grows in you to the extent that love grows, because charity itself is the soul's beauty. You cannot attain to charity except through humility.
- To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek him the greatest adventure; to find him, the greatest human achievement.
- Oh, God, to know you is life. To serve you is freedom. To praise you is the soul's joy and delight. Guard me with the power of your grace here and in all places.
- A Christian should be an Alleluia from head to foot.
- Where your pleasure is, there is your treasure: where your treasure, there your heart; where your heart, there your happiness.
- Our hearts were made for You, O Lord, and they are restless until they rest in you.

A wife was frying eggs for her husband's breakfast. Suddenly, her husband burst into the kitchen. "*Careful,*" he said, "*CAREFUL! Put in some more butter! Oh dear! You're cooking too many at once. TOO MANY! Turn them! TURN THEM NOW! We need more butter. Oh dear! WHERE are we going to get MORE BUTTER? They're going to STICK! Careful! CAREFUL! I said be CAREFUL! You NEVER listen to me when you're cooking! Never! Turn them! Hurry up! Are you CRAZY? Have you LOST your mind? Don't forget to salt them. You know you always forget to salt them. Use the salt. USE THE SALT! THE SALT!*"

His wife stared at him. "*What in the world is wrong with you? You think I don't know how to fry a couple of eggs?*"

The husband calmly replied, "*I just wanted to show you what it feels like when I'm driving.*"