

July 6, 2021

Good Morning All,

1. Today's Readings: [Tuesday of the Fourteenth Week in Ordinary Time | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: The Church gives us saints of all ages for our help and inspiration. St. Maria Goretti died at the age of 11, the victim of an attack in which she prayed for her killer.

3. Quotes of the Day:

~ "He loves, He Hopes, He Waits Our Lord prefers to wait Himself for the sinner for years rather than keep us waiting an instant." *St. Maria Goretti*

~ "Not all of us are expected to die a martyr's death, but we are all called to the pursuit of Christian virtue. This demands strength of character though it may not match that of this innocent girl. Still, a constant, persistent and relentless effort is asked of us right up to the moment of our death." *Pope Pius XII*

St. Maria Goretti, Pray for Us!

St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

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St. Maria Goretti



(The above painting is the one Maria's mother said most resembles her daughter.)

Born into a poor peasant family of six children at the end of the 19th century in Italy, Maria Goretti's life was difficult from the beginning. Her family worked as farm hands and the children had to help feed the family as well.

Halfway through her short, saintly life, Maria's father died of malaria. For some time, the family had been working in the fields with another family named Serenelli. Now Maria's mother had to work in the fields in place of her deceased husband and left Maria to take care of the smaller children.

She prayed a rosary every night for the repose of her father's soul and was noted for her piety and virtue by many of those around her.

In 1902, after many advances on Maria, all of which she rejected, Alessandro Serenelli, a 19 year old farm hand, locked her into a room and tried to force himself upon her. She refused, fighting and warning him that he was committing a sin and that he would go to hell. Enraged, he then strangled her and stabbed her fourteen times.

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She was rushed to hospital when they found her bleeding to death from her wounds and she survived for two agonizing days before dying.

In the hospital she was asked if she forgave Alessandro, and she replied "Yes, for the love of Jesus I forgive him...and I want him to be with me in Paradise."

Alessandro was sentenced to prison for 30 years. One day, eight years into his prison term, he had a vision of a young girl dressed in white gathering lilies in a garden. She smiled, came near Alessandro and encouraged him to accept the lilies. Each lily he took transformed into a still white flame. Then Maria disappeared.

This vision led to the conversion of Alessandro who repented deeply of what he had done. He served 19 more years in prison and was then released. The first thing he did on his release was to go and ask the forgiveness of Maria's mother, which she duly granted. Alessandro worked as a gardener in a Franciscan monastery for the rest of his life.

Alessandro was one of the witnesses who testified to Maria's holiness during her cause of beatification, citing the crime and the vision in prison.

Maria's mother, Assunta, was present at her canonization ceremony in 1950 - the only time in history that a parent has been present at their child's canonization - and 250,000 people were in attendance.

Maria Goretti is a patron saint of girls, rape victims, children and youth in general.

Source: Catholicnewsagency.com