



Feast of St. Agatha, Martyr

St. Agatha (231-251 A.D.) was born in Sicily into an affluent family. At a young age she made the decision to devote herself to Christ, resisting every offer of marriage. Struck by her beauty and wealth, a magistrate named Quintian desired to marry her. He plotted to use his political power to force her hand and threatened to prosecute her for the crime of Christianity unless she accepted his sexual advances. When she refused, he forced her into a brothel. Even there, she refused to relinquish her chastity. Furious, Quintian imprisoned and tortured Agatha, ordering her breasts to be cut off. Upon this barbaric treatment, God sent St. Peter the Apostle to Agatha in a vision, and he healed her wounds. St. Agatha's torture continued until an earthquake caused her captors to flee, and she died shortly after. St. Agatha is the patroness of rape victims, torture victims, martyrs, nurses, and against breast cancer. She is one of the seven women, besides the Virgin Mary, mentioned by name in the Roman Canon of the Mass.