

4// HERE FOLLOWETH THE LIFE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN LUCY

ST. LUCY'S MOTHER IS CURED OF THE FLUX

St. Lucy, the holy virgin, was born in Sicily, and extract and engendered of a noble lineage, in the city of Syracuse. When she heard of the good fame and renown of St. Agatha or Agaas, which was published and spread all about, anon she went to her sepulchre with her mother which was named Euthicia, which had a malady, named the bloody flux, by the space of four years, the which no master in physic ne surgery could heal.

And when they were at a mass, one read a gospel which made mention of a woman which was healed of the bloody flux by touching of the hem of the coat of Jesu Christ. When St. Lucy heard this, anon she said to her mother: Mother, if ye believe that this which is read be true, and also that St. Agatha hath now presently with her Jesu Christ, and also that for his name she suffered martyrdom, and if ye, with this belief, touch her sepulchre, without doubt ye shall be anon guerished and healed.

Upon this they, after the mass, when the people were departed, they twain fell down on their knees on the sepulchre of St. Agatha in prayers, and weeping began to pray for her help and aid. St. Lucy in making her prayers for her mother fell asleep, and she saw in her sleep St. Agatha among the angels, nobly adorned and arrayed with precious stones, which said thus to her: Lucy, my sweet sister, devout virgin to God, wherefore prayest thou to me for thy mother, for such thing as thou mayest thyself right soon give to her? For I tell the for truth, that for thy faith, and thy good, thy mother is safe and whole.

With these words St. Lucy awoke all afraid, and said to her mother: Mother, ye be guerished and all whole; I pray you for her sake by whose prayers ye be healed, that ye never make mention to me for to take an husband ne spouse, but all that good that ye would give me with a man, I pray you that ye will give it to me for to do alms withal that I may come to my saviour Jesu Christ.

Her mother answered to her: Fair daughter, thy patrimony, which I have received this nine years, sith thy father died, I have nothing aminished, but I have multiplied and increased it; but abide till I am departed out of this world, and then forthon do as it shall please thee.

Lucy is said of light, and light is beauty in beholding, after that St. Ambrose saith: The nature of light is such, she is gracious in beholding, she spreadeth over all without lying down, she passeth in going right without crooking by right long line; and it is without dilation of tarrying, and therefore it is showed the blessed Lucy hath beauty of virginity without any corruption; essence of charity without disordinate love; rightful going and devotion to God, without squaring out of the way; right long line by continual work without negligence of slothful tarrying. In Lucy is said, the way of light.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER SELL LUCY'S PATRIMONY FOR THE POOR

St. Lucy said: Sweet mother, hear my counsel: he is not beloved of God, that for his love giveth that which he may not use himself, but if thou wilt find God debonair to thee, give for him that which thou mayest dispend, for after thy death thou mayest in no wise use thy goods. That which thou givest when thou shalt die, thou givest it because thou mayest not bear it with thee. Give then for God's sake whiles thou livest: and as to such good as thou oughtest to give to me with an husband or spouse, begin to give all that to your people for the love of Jesu Christ.

Hereof spake alway Lucy to her mother, and every day they gave alms of their goods. And when they had almost sold their patrimony and their jewels, tidings came to the knowledge of her spouse that should have wedded her, and that she was promised to, the which he demanded hereof the truth of the nurse of St. Lucy, and wherefore they sold thus their patrimony.

She answered cautelously [artfully], and said that they did it because that St. Lucy, which should have been his wife, had found one which had a more fairer and nobler heritage than his was, the which they would buy tofore ere they should assemble by marriage. The fool believed it, for he understood carnally this that the nurse had said to him spiritually, and helped them to sell their heritage. But when he understood that she gave all for God's love, and that he felt himself deceived, anon he complained on Lucy, and made her to come tofore a judge named Paschasius, which was a miscreant and heathen man.

ST. LUCY BEFORE THE JUDGE

Her Words with Paschasius

And it was because she was Christian, and that she did against the law of the Emperor, Paschasius blamed her, and admonested her to worship and do sacrifice to the idols. She said: Sacrifice which pleaseth God is to visit the widows and orphans, and to help them in their need: I have not ceased these three years past to make to God such sacrifice, and forasmuch as I have no more of which I may make yet such sacrifice, I offer to him myself, let him do with his offering as it pleaseth him.

Paschasius said: Thou mightest say these words unto Christian people, semblable to thee, but to me which keep the commandments of the emperors, thou sayest them in vain.

St. Lucy said: If thou wilt keep the law of thy lords, I shall keep the law of God; thou doubttest to anger them, and I shall keep me that I anger not my God; thou wilt please them, and I covet only to please our Lord Jesu Christ.

Paschasius said: Thou hast dispended thy patrimony with the ribalds, and therefore thou speakest as a ribald.

She said. I have set my patrimony in a sure place; unto the corruption of my heart ne body, I never agreed ne suffered it.

Paschasius said: Who be they that corrupt the heart and the body?

She said: Ye be that corrupt the hearts, of whom the apostle said, “The evil words corrupt the good manners.” Ye counsel the souls to forsake their creator and to ensue the devil in making sacrifice to the idols; the corrupters of the body be they that love the short delectations corporal, and despise delights spiritual that endure for ever.

Paschasius said: These words that thou sayest shall finish when thou shalt come to thy pains.

She said: The words of God may not end ne finish.

Paschasius said: How then! art thou God?

She said: I am the handmaid of God, and for so much as I say, they be the words of God, for he saith, “Ye be not they that speak tofore the princes and judges, but the Holy Ghost speaketh in you.”¹

Paschasius said: And therefore the Holy Ghost is in thee?

She said: The apostle saith that they be the temple of God that live chastely, and the Holy Ghost dwelleth in them.²

Paschasius said: I shall do bring thee to the bordel, where thou shalt lose thy chastity, and then the Holy Ghost shall depart from thee.

She said: The body may take no corruption but if the heart and will give thereto assenting: for if thou madest me to do sacrifice by my hands, by force, to the idols, against my will, God shall take it only but as a derision, for he judgeth only of the will and consenting. And therefore, if thou make my body to be defouled without mine assent, and against my will, my chastity shall increase double to the merit of the crown of glory. What thing that thou dost to the body, which is in thy power, that beareth no prejudice to the handmaid of Jesu Christ.

Consigned to the Ribalds of the Town, She Proves Immovable

Then commanded Paschasius that the ribalds of the town should come, to whom he delivered St. Lucy, saying: Call other to you for to defoul her, and labour her so much till she be dead.

Anon the ribalds would have drawn her from thence where she was, and have brought her to the bordel, but the Holy Ghost made her so pesant and heavy that in no wise might they move her from the place. Wherefore many of the servants of the judge put hand to, for to draw with the other, and she abode still. Then they bound cords to her hands and feet, and all drew, but she abode always still as a mountain, without moving. Whereof Paschasius was all anguious and

¹ Mark 13:11, “And when they bring you to trial and deliver you up, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say; but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit” (RSV)

² 1 Corinthians 3:16, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (RSV)

angry, and did do call his enchanters, which might never move her for all enchantery. Then Paschasius did do yoke for her oxen many, for to draw her, and yet they might not move her from the place. Then Paschasius demanded her for what reason might it be that a frail maid might not be drawn ne moved by a thousand men.

She said: It is the work of God, and if thou settest thereto yet ten thousand they should not move me.

Of these words the judge was sore tormented, and St. Lucy said to him: Wherefore tormentest thou thyself thus? If thou hast proved and assayed that I am the temple of God, believe it. If thou hast not assayed, learn to assay.

She is Put in a Fire

And hereof was the judge more tormented, for he saw that she made but her mockery with him. Wherefore he did do make about St. Lucy a right great fire, and made to be cast on her pitch, resin, and boiling oil, and she abode all still tofore the fire, and said: I have prayed to Jesu Christ that this fire have no domination in me to the end that the Christian men that believe in God make of thee their derision. And I have prayed for respite of my martyrdom for to take away from the Christian men the fear and dread to die for the faith of Jesu Christ, and to take away from the miscreants the avaunting of my martyrdom.

Stabbed in the Throat, She Prophetesies to the People

The friends of the judge saw that he was confused by the words of St. Lucy, and of the drawing much greatly tormented, and therefore they roof a sword through her throat, and yet for all that she died not anon, but spake to the people, saying: I announce and show to you that holy church shall have peace, for Diocletian the emperor, which was enemy to holy church is this day put out of his seignory, and Maximian, his fellow, is this day dead. And in likewise as St. Agatha is patroness and keeper of Catania, in the same wise shall I be committed to be patroness of Syracuse, this city.

And as she spake thus to the people, the sergeants and ministers of Rome came for to take Paschasius and bring him to Rome, because he was accused tofore the senators of Rome of that he had robbed the province; wherefore he received his sentence of the senate, and had his head smitten off.

HER DEATH

St. Lucy never removed from the place where she was hurt with the sword, ne died not till the priest came and brought the blessed body of our Lord Jesu Christ. And as soon as she had received the blessed sacrament she rendered and gave up her soul to God, thanking and praising him of all his goodness. In that same place is a church edified in the name of her, whereas many benefits have been given to the honour of our Lord Jesu Christ, which is blessed world without end. Amen.

The [iconography of St. Lucy](#) is available at the [Christian iconography website](#).

For other saints, see the [index to this Golden Legend website](#).

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