

Learn About the Saints



St. Margaret of Cortona

Biography

Though St. Margaret of Cortona (1247 – 1297) is today known as being an incredibly pious Catholic, she didn't start out that way. Born into a farming family in Laviano, Tuscany, her mother died when St. Margaret was seven. Her father remarried, but life with her stepmother was so difficult that St. Margaret moved out of the home and instead chose to live with a man named Arsenio, though they weren't married. They had been living together for nine years when she gave birth to a son. Knowing in her heart that this wasn't the life that God intended for her to have, she prayed for purity.

One day, while waiting for Arsenio, his dog led her into the forest, where she found Arsenio murdered. So shocked was St. Margaret that she fell into a life of penance. She and her son returned to Laviano, but her stepmother remained as unwelcoming as ever. They then went to Cortona, and eventually her son became a friar.

Three years after her conversion, St. Margaret followed in her son's footsteps and became a Franciscan tertiary. During her life, St. Margaret established a hospital and founded a congregation of tertiary sisters. She was canonized in 1728. Today, she is known as the patron saint for women raising children alone and invoked against sexual temptation.

St. Margaret of Cortona, pray for us!

