

Saint Juliana of Nicomedia

SAINT OF THE DAY

16_02_2020



Saint Juliana (ca. 285-305) came from Nicomedia, the capital of the Eastern Roman empire under Diocletian (Maximian was ruling over the West). Juliana was a victim of the Great Persecution (303-305), whose harsh anti-Christian measures were probably influenced by Diocletian's Caesar (i.e., sub-emperor) Galerius – who retracted five days before dying, by granting freedom of worship with the edict of April 30, 311.

The memory of Saint Juliana was included in the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, written by a 5th-century anonymous author and originally attributed to Saint Jerome

(hence the name). According to an ancient *Passio* included in the martyrology compiled by Saint Bede (673-735), Juliana was the daughter of a pagan officer named Africanus, who had promised her in marriage to Eleusius, a man close to the emperor and also a pagan, while still a child. As she grew up, the girl realised the emptiness of paganism, she was secretly baptised and at the time of the wedding refused to marry Eleusius. Another source reports that Juliana said she would marry him only if he converted to Christianity. In fact, nothing could shake the steadfastness of her faith: she was arrested on the charge of being a Christian, subjected to torture, and finally beheaded.

Tradition reports that a noblewoman transported her remains to Italy. The Saint was buried in Cumae and her relics, later scattered around Europe, became the object of veneration. Her cult was particularly popular during the Middle Ages, especially in Campania and the Netherlands.

Patroness of: women about to give birth, people affected by contagious diseases