

Saint Demiana

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.

Aim

- ✠ To know about the blessed life of this great martyr.
- ✠ To apply some of her virtues in our own lives.

Key verses

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt 6:33)

Lesson

There are two feast days in the Synaxarium for our beloved saint:

1. On the 13th of Tubah (January 21) is the Martyrdom of St. Demiana.
2. On the 12th of Bashans (May 20) is the Commemoration of the Consecration of the first Church of St Demiana.

St Demiana didn't become a saint in one night, but increasing in her spiritual level day after day throughout her life, let us look closely and try to follow her footsteps to reach where she reached, the kingdom of heaven.

There are three contemplations on the life and martyrdom of the great martyr St Demiana; looking back on her childhood, youth, purity, faith and, ultimately, her blessed martyrdom.



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First Contemplation - St. Demiana's Childhood:

When she was one year old, her father took her to the church. He offered candles and oblations so that God might bless her and keep her in His care.

Her parents saw that their most important role was to raise a God-loving child in the Church.

Our Holy Coptic Orthodox Church receives children into the life of the Church from their birth,

- Baptizing them
- Inviting them to partake regularly of the holy Eucharist.
- As soon as a child is able, they are encouraged to participate in Confession, where they learn to love obedience and spiritual fatherhood.
- Also the worship in our holy Orthodox Church is well suited for children as it appeals to all their senses. The child immediately is able to participate in the worship, even without understanding, by hearing the sacred chants, smelling the fragrant incense, touching and kissing the colorful icons, and tasting the precious Body and Blood of Christ.

Being in the environment of the church, there is no doubt that as a child St. Demiana

- studied the Scriptures,
- prayed with her parents,
- heard and read the lives of the saints,
- learned to love fasting and good deeds,
- And eagerly attended the divine services at Church.

During this time, while still a child, she cultivated in her heart a great love for her Savior as well as her fellow neighbor.

Second Contemplation - St. Demiana's Youth and Purity:

- When she was fifteen years old she vowed herself a bride to the Lord Christ.
- She lived with forty other virgins they spent their time reading the Holy Bible and in worship.
- I cannot imagine that someone who is only fifteen years could attract forty others to this new and difficult way of life! Who today can live such a life of praise, worship and virtue at this age?

How did she attract others?

- She did it simply through her beautiful, pure and gentle spirit!
- Through living a life of worship and virtue in Christ!

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Not only she won over those forty virgin, how many millions now from generation to generation have grown closer to Christ through the story of her pure life and holy martyrdom?!

How can we witness to Christ?

- Indeed, our greatest witness for Christ to the world is to simply be true Christians
- Our life should be focused on loving Christ Himself! You will find this is the only way to perfection,
- Like St Demiana, Labor in your prayers, fasting and attendance at Church services that you may find the pearl of great price (Matt. 13:46). And listen to **St. John Chrysostom** encouragement, **Labors come first, and the crowns after.**

If we accomplish this:

- Our good deeds toward others should be a natural result of a holy life.
- We will not need to use our words to speak of Christ. It is only because our deeds and virtues are lacking that we must use the words. How true indeed is the saying, preach the Gospel and use words if necessary.

Third Contemplation - St. Demiana Confesses Her Faith & Martyrdom

At that time, all what the pagans asked of the Christians was to worship the idols by offering some incense before them.

When the prince ordered our holy saint to worship the idols, see how St. Demiana responded:

“There is no god in heaven or on earth except one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. To Him I confess and upon Him I depend, and in His Name I die, and by Him I live forever.”

What a beautiful and perfect confession of the Orthodox faith! A confession that:

- She joyfully shed her blood to proclaim and protect!
- Caused numerous other holy martyrs to shed their blood

How that seems relevant to us today, since we don't see idols or have to worship them?

Today's situation is actually worse! Today's gods don't appear in the forms of wooden or stone idols, they are much more cunning and deceptive. They appear to us as material, self-love, lust, and love of money and all what is around us that can distract us from God. Let us be aware!

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Conclusion:

I want everyone to think of why would all these Martyrs including St Demiana Shed their blood?

- They believed in God with all their heart, soul, strength and mind
- There can be no greater witness to their love of Christ
- There can be no greater witness that Christ is truly the “Way, the Truth and Life”.

The blood of Christians like St Demiana is a seed! If we study the history of our Holy Church we will see that, the more blood that was shed for Christ, the more new people believed in Him and became Christian!

Most of us do not face this type martyrdom, so how can we share in their crowns? St. Clement of Alexandria offers us this: Martyrdom means bearing witness to God. Every soul that seeks in pureness of heart to know God and obey the commandments of God is a martyr, bearing witness by life or by words.

Glory is to God, forever. Amen.