

Saint Margaret of Castello



- Feastday: April 13
- Patron Saint of: the disabled, the blind, and the pro-life movement
- Birth: 1287
- Death: April 13, 1320
- Canonized: by Pope Francis on April 24, 2021

*"Oh, if you
only knew
what I have
in my heart!"*

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Saint Margaret of Castello was born into a wealthy family near Florence, Italy in 1287. To the great distress of her parents, upon her birth, they discovered that she suffered from a variety of severe physical ailments. She was a dwarf, had a curved spine that left her hunched over, was lame to the point that she could barely walk, and was blind.

Her family kept her hidden away from the age of six when she was walled up in a room beside a chapel. When she was sixteen, her parents took her to a Franciscan shrine to ask for a miracle, but when they didn't receive one, they abandoned her there. Some in the community took pity on her and gave her the help she needed to survive. She later became a member of the Dominican Third Order of Castello.

Despite her suffering, Saint Margaret remained serene, calm, cheerful, and courageous, never complaining or being discouraged. She went to mass daily and prayed fervently to Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and St. Dominic. She did not know why God allowed her to suffer from so many afflictions, yet she did know that He was all-good, did not allow evil without a good reason, and always turned evil into good for His children. She wondered why people pitied her; was it not a privilege to suffer with Christ? Suffering for her was her way to heaven.

Since her death at age 33, she has continued to help those who pray to her. Many cures have since been attributed to her intercession. She is an inspiration to those who are discouraged and tempted to self-pity. Her intercession is most powerful to those who suffer from eye and muscular diseases. She has also become a patron for pro-life groups, and those who are unwanted and abandoned.

St. Margaret was declared Blessed in 1609. Her incorrupt body lies under the main altar of St. Dominic Church in Castello. Many visit her shrine there. She was canonized a saint, 701 years after her death, by Pope Francis on April 24, 2021.