

# Saint Maria Goretti



- Feastday: July 6
- Patron Saint of: youth, young women, purity, and victims of rape
- Birth: October 16, 1890
- Death: July 6, 1902
- Canonized: by Pope Pius XII in 1950

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Saint Maria Goretti was born on October 16, 1890, in Corinaldo, Italy. Her farmworker father died of malaria, so Maria's mother and siblings worked in the fields while she cooked, sewed, and watched her youngest sister Teresa. Though their circumstances were extremely difficult, they were very close and loved God.

On July 5, 1902, Maria was sitting outside the steps of her home sewing 18-year-old Alessandro's shirt while he threshed beans in the barnyard. Alessandro surprised her and grabbed her from her steps. When he tried to rape her, Maria cried that it was a mortal sin and warned him that he would go to hell.

When Alessandro persisted, she fought him and screamed, "No! It is a sin! God does not want it!" At her words, Alessandro began to choke her and she said she would rather die than submit. Upon hearing her words, Alexander pulled out a knife and stabbed her eleven times. When she attempted to reach the door, he stabbed her three more times and then fled.

Maria's family returned home and found her bleeding on the floor. They took her to the nearest hospital, where she underwent surgery without anesthesia.

The next day, Maria forgave Alessandro and said she wanted to see him in Heaven with her. She died soon after.

*"He loves,  
He hopes,  
He waits.  
Our Lord prefers  
to wait Himself  
for the sinner for  
years rather than  
keep us waiting  
an instant."*



Alessandro was sentenced to thirty years in prison. He remained unrepentant until he had a dream that he was in a garden. Maria was there and gave him lilies, which immediately burned in his hands. When he woke, he was a changed man. He repented for his crime and lived a reformed life.

Three years later, Maria was declared a saint and Alessandro was present in the St. Peter's crowd to celebrate her canonization. He later became a lay-brother of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin, where he lived in a monastery and worked as its receptionist and gardener until his death.