

When her friend and benefactor, the monk Paul, was made bishop of the area, he asked Xenia to become a deaconess of the Church, an invitation which she hesitated to accept until a contingent of islanders prevailed upon her to put aside her doubts and assist the bishop who would in turn assist her in doing God's work. Forewarned in a vision of the imminence of her death, Xenia walked out of the village quietly to her bed and fell asleep in Lord on January 24. The beam of light that shone brilliantly in her room as she died left no doubt as to her ascent to Heaven.

Liturgical Hymns of St Xenia

Troparion (Tone 8)

In you the image was preserved with exactness, O Mother;
For taking up the cross, you did follow Christ,
And by your deed you did teach us to overlook the flesh which
will pass away, but attend to the soul since it is immortal.
Wherefore, O righteous Xenia, your spirit rejoices with the
Angels.

Kontakion (Tone 2)

Celebrating the memorial of your life, you did live as a stranger,
and honoring you with love, we praise Christ who gave you the
power to grant healings to all. O Xenia, every pray to Him for us
all.

Prayers at Icon of St. Xenia of Rome

You did live the life of a stranger in the world and was estranged to every sin; you did abandon comforts and fleeting honors and betroth yourself to your Immortal Bridegroom. O glorious Xenia, entreat Christ our God to grant us His great mercy.

Or

Celebrating the memory of the life you did live as a stranger, and honoring you with love, we praise Christ who gave you power to grant healings to all. O Xenia, ever pray to Him for us all.

ST. XENIA OF ROME

Independent Catholic Orthodox Mission



Deaconess of the Early Church

January 24, 450.c

***"Do not love the (ways) of world or anything in the world.
If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them."***

I John 2:15



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ST. XENIA OF ROME

Commemorated on January 24

Child prodigies are not restricted to artistic expression in areas such as music, literature and art but have been seen in the expression of a deep religious commitment, a prime example of which was St. Xenia, who evinced a sense of piety at an age when children were expected to play with blocks or games of hide and seek. A serious child almost from birth, she hid from nothing but evil and sought no one but the Savior. William Blake, who was a poet, artist and visionary, claimed he saw God in a tree when he looked out the window one day at the age of four. At the same age, there is no question that there was a touch of divine grace in Xenia, although she was never known to have remarked that she saw God.



Xenia is known to have been born into an upper class family of Rome and to have been baptized with the name of Eusebia. She also has been known to have taken life very seriously, harboring a piety which went undetected even by her parents, who placed more emphasis on her social training than on her spiritual guidance, despite the fact that they were dedicated members of the Christian faith. Church attendance for her family was regular and sincere but lacked the intensity felt by the daughter, which escaped the notice of the parents even when she joined them in many acts of charity, which they could well afford.

Considered unsmiling and distant by youngsters who tried to reach her heart, the quite personable and lovely Eusebia endeared herself to the community as a whole who construed her quiet solitude as difference and not the indifference seen by those who sought to probe the inner reaches of her mind which was preoccupied with thoughts of the Savior. As she grew into her teens, however, the comparative isolation which she found from time to time grew more and more elusive as families gathered closer to hers with sons who would have her as a bride.

It was the family that arranged the nuptials, and she was barely seventeen when a husband was selected for her from among the many eligible young men of Eusebia's social level. She had made a decision for Christ and rather than create any unpleasant scenes which might mark disobedience to her parents' will, she observed that calling she heard to a higher will, and she decided to quietly slip away. With the assistance of a servant and confidante, she arranged a passage on a boat bound for the Holy Land and left unnoticed with some regret that she had to leave her parents in this manner but with high hopes of fulfilling her lofty ambition.

Eusebia's first order of business was a visit to the tomb of Jesus Christ where she paused in prayer for divine guidance and for forgiveness for having offended her parents. After several such prayerful visits, she, for reasons known only to her, left the Holy Land to go to the island of Kos in the Aegean where she met a highly respected monk named Paul, who saw at a glance the grace within this gentle creature of God whom he dubbed "Xenia", meaning the stranger, which is what she considered herself, and the name she adopted from then on.

Paul sensed that there were great things in store for this visitor to his island and arranged to have her settle in an isolated hut which afforded her privacy and the solitude she needed for prayer and meditation. She emerged from isolation after a period of time with an aura of the Divine so evident that Paul urged her to make herself known on the island to do what she could for a people that knew little but poverty.

Saint Xenia often stood all night in prayer, fasted, and humbled herself before God and others. She was a shining light to all and followed her Savior in meekness and humility. Of her is written that she "helped everyone: for the destitute, she was a benefactress; for the grief-stricken, a comforter; for sinners, a guide to repentance. She possessed a deep humility, accounting herself the worst and most sinful of all".

She not only brought to these islanders a rare kind of spiritual guidance, but a rarer still power of healing which made her the cynosure of all who came to revere her in life as one sent from heaven.

