



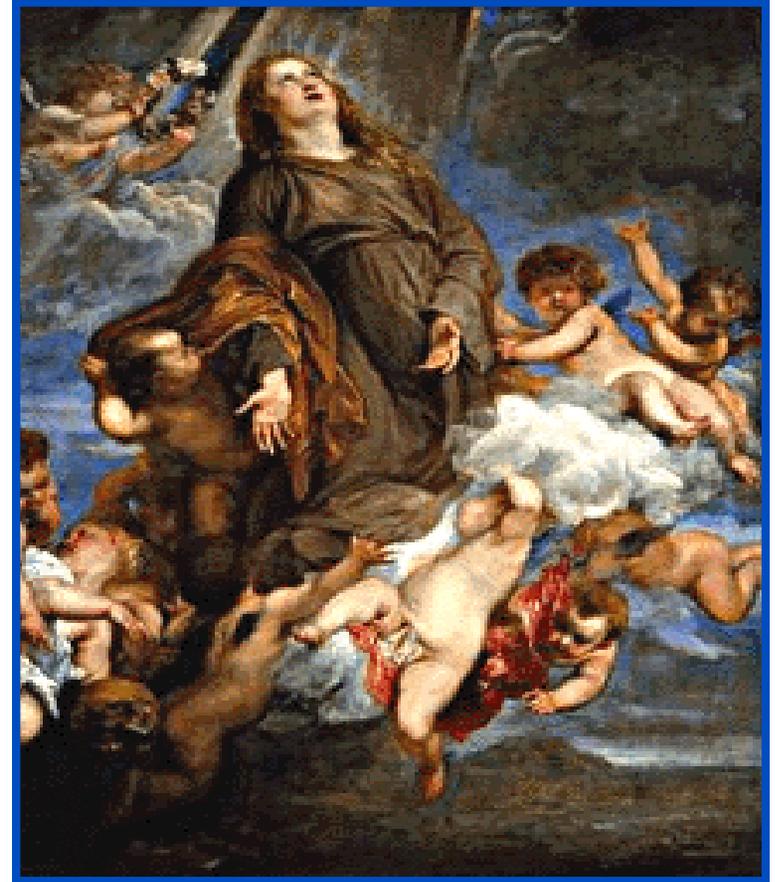
SAINT ROSALIE PATRON SAINT OF SICILY

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Saint Rosalie of Sicily

"The Little Saint"

Feast Days: Sept 4 & 7/15 (Festino)



Patronage:
Palermo, Italy; El Hatillo,
Venezuela and Zuata, Anzoátequi, Venezuela

Saint Rosalia (1130–1166),

also called La Santuzza or "*The Little Saint*",
Is the patron saint of Palermo, Sicily, El Hatillo, Venezuela, and
Zuata, Anzoategui, Venezuela.

*Legend

According to legend, Rosalia was born of a Norman noble family that claimed descent from Charlemagne. Devoutly religious, she retired to live as a hermit in a cave on Mount Pellegrino, where she died alone in 1166. Tradition says that she was led to the cave by two angels. On the cave wall she wrote "*I, Rosalia, daughter of Sinibald, Lord of Roses, and Quisquina, have taken the resolution to live in this cave for the love of my Lord, Jesus Christ.*"

In 1624, a horrible plague haunted Palermo, and during this hardship St Rosalia appeared first to a sick woman, then to a hunter to whom she indicated where her remains were to be found. She ordered him to bring her bones to Palermo and have them carried in procession through the city.

The hunter climbed the mountain and found her bones in the cave as described. He did what she had asked in the apparition, and after the procession the plague ceased. After this St Rosalia would be venerated as the patron saint of Palermo, and a sanctuary was built in the cave where her remains were discovered.

Veneration

The celebration, called the *festino*, is still held each year on July 15. It is still a major social and religious event in Palermo. In 1995, 1996, 1997 and 2001 the celebration has been produced by Studio Festi.

Also on September 4 there is an event related to the *festino* and St. Rosalia; a tradition of walking bare foot from Palermo up to Mount Pellegrino. In Italian American communities in the United States, the July feast is generally dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel while the September feast, beginning in August, brings large numbers of visitors annually to the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn in New York City.

In biology

Saint Rosalia was proposed as the patron saint of evolutionary studies in a classic paper by G.E. Hutchinson. This was due to a visit he paid to a pool of water downstream from the cave where St. Rosalia's remains were found, where he developed ideas based on observations of water boatman. The article, and its reference to St. Rosalia has lived on through the literature, often in the title of papers concerning biodiversity.

*(Excerpted from: www.princeton.edu)