

forty days before Easter and the forty days before Christmas. During these periods of self-denial, she would go into the church and said alone three sets of Matins, then the Offices of the Dead, then the whole Psalter. Then returning to her room and there assisted by her husband, she washed the feet of six poor persons who were brought there by the chamberlain. After a little rest, she began her works of mercy again; while the psalms were being read to her, nine little destitute orphans were brought to her, and she took each on her lap and fed it with her own spoon. While she was feeding the babies, 300 poor persons were brought into the hall and along with her husband and the chaplains, served them food and drink. After this meal, the queen used to go into the church and offered herself as a sacrifice to God...She had 5 or 6 private Masses sung in her presence before the public Mass...When it was time for her own dinner, before she ate, she waited on 24 poor people who were her daily care at all seasons.

For more than six months before her death, Margaret was confined to her bed. Malcolm invaded England many times after 1068, supporting the claim of his brother-in-law Edgar Atheling to the English throne. In 1072, however, he was forced to pay homage to William I, and in 1091, to William II. Shortly before Margaret's death, the king against her advice, made a raid into Northumberland where he and her eldest son, Edward were slain by Norman forces at Alnwick on November 13, 1093...Three days later on November 16, 1093 Margaret died at Edinburgh Castle...While her body still lay in the Castle, Malcolm's brother, Donald Bane attacked the castle.. Margaret's family and her faithful attendants escaped when a thick mist hid them from the enemy...Margaret's son continued her work, which contributed greatly to a golden age in Scotland for two hundred years after her death...In 1693 Innocent XII transferred Margaret's festival from the day of her death to June 10, although November 16 is still the day celebrated in Scotland.

*(excerpted from: www.rootsweb.ancestry.com)

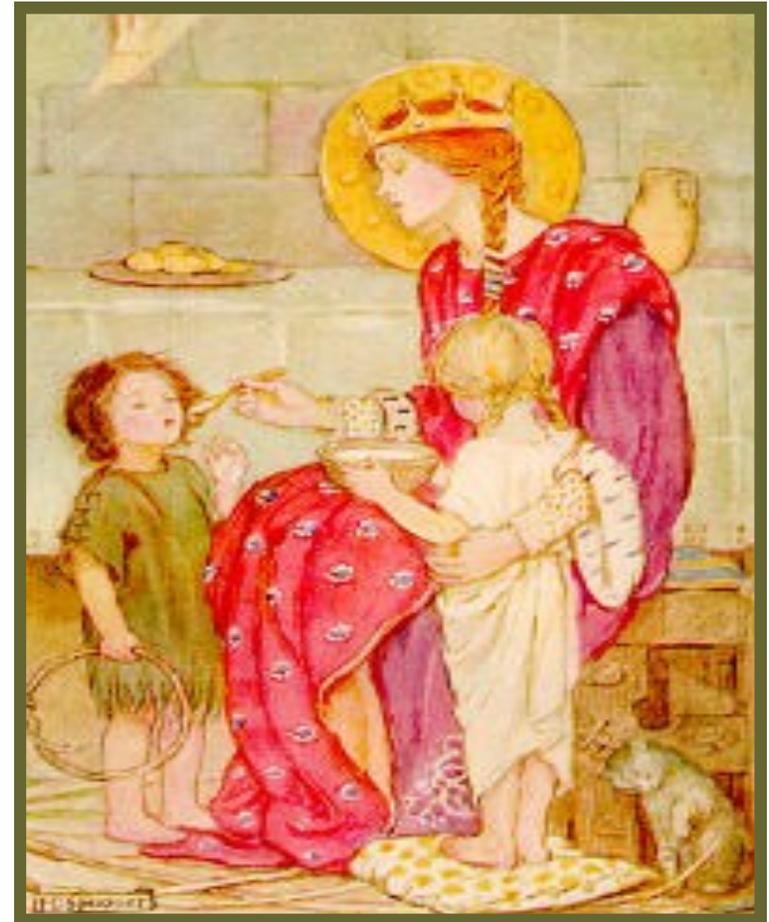


Saint Margaret Giving Counsel

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Saint Margaret Queen of Scotland

Feast Day: June 10th



O God, who didst call thy servant Margaret to an earthly throne that she might advance thy heavenly kingdom, and didst give her zeal for thy church and love for thy people: Mercifully grant that we who commemorate her this day may be fruitful in good works, and attain to the glorious crown of thy saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

Saint Margaret, Queen of Scotland

*Margaret was born around 1045 in Hungary, the daughter of the exiled English prince Edward "the Outlaw" Atheling of the English royal house of Wessex, and a German Princess named Agatha. She was raised in the court of Saint Stephen, King of Hungary. In 1057 when she was about 12, Margaret and her family returned to England, where the king was Saint Edward the Confessor. After the Norman conquest in 1066 and her husband's death in 1067, Agatha with her son and two daughters resolved to return to Hungary and embarked with that intent. Their ship was driven up to the Firth of Forth to Dunfermline, where Malcolm III, king of Scotland, received them hospitably and granted them refuge. He very soon offered the whole family a permanent home with him and asked that the Princess Margaret should become his wife. Margaret, who was a very devout and much impressed with the futility of earthly greatness, had very nearly determined to be a nun, but when Malcolm's request was made, she was persuaded to marry the king.

Malcolm III was born ca. 1031 and founded the house of Canmore, which ruled Scotland for more than 200 years, and consolidated the power of the Scottish monarchy. He was the son of Duncan I, who was killed (1040) by Macbeth. Malcolm lived in exile until he defeated and killed (1057) Macbeth near Lumphanan in Aberdeenshire. He succeeded to the throne in 1057, and married Margaret ca. 1068-1070.

Margaret's holiness and wisdom had an impact on Malcolm, causing him to be a better ruler. Malcolm regarded his wife with holy reverence, and with most devoted love followed her advice, and guided by her he became not only more religious and conscientious but also more civilized and kinglike. The king's devotion to her and her influence over him were almost unbounded. He never refused her anything, nor showed the least displeasure when she took money out of his treasury for her charities. In addition to her influence with her husband and her two sons, who later succeeded their father in ruling Scotland, she also took a direct role in helping the people of Scotland. She devoted time and money to works of charity, assisting the poor, the aged, orphans and the sick. She also prevented a schism between the Roman Church and the Celtic Church, which had been cut off from Rome. In addition, she introduced European culture to Scotland. She was as saintly and self-denying on the throne as she could have been in the cloister. She once perceived it to be her duty to benefit and elevate the people among whom it was her destiny to live, and this she

undertook with the greatest diligence and most earnest piety. There existed so much barbarism in the customs of the people, so many abuses in the Church, that she called together the native clergy and the priests that had come with her, along with her husband acting as an interpreter, and spoke so earnestly that all were charmed with her gracious demeanor and wise counsel that they adopted her suggestions.

Margaret is credited with the introduction of English (Roman) usages into the Scottish church. Among other improvements, she introduced the observance of Sunday- by abstaining from servile work. She influenced her people to observe the forty days' fast of Lent, and to receive the Holy Sacrament on Easter Day, from which they had abstained for fear of increasing their own damnation because they were sinners...She re-founded the monastery on the Island of Iona (originally founded by Saint Columba, an Irish missionary who founded the monastery in 563 in an attempt to convert the Picts). One of her first acts as queen was to build a church at Dunfermline, where she had been married. She dedicated it to the Holy Trinity.

Margaret also did much for the secular as well as for the religious improvement of her country. It is said that she introduced the tartans that afterwards became distinctive of Scottish costume... Numbers of English captives that had been taken in the wars in raids between England and Scotland were freed by the queen...She provided ships at a place on the Firth of Forth, still called "The Queen's Ferry," that all persons coming from distant parts on pilgrimage to Saint Andrews might be brought across the water free of charge...She built homes of rest and shelter for poor strangers in various places...She had a wonderful understanding of the Scriptures and delighted to consult learned and holy men concerning the sacred writings, and they often found themselves far wiser after a conversation with her...She brought up her eight children very strictly and piously and the fruit of her good training appeared in their lives for long years after her time.

Her abstinence was so great and her care for her own needs or gratification so small that her feast days were like fast days of others. She fasted so strictly that she suffered acutely all her life from pain in her stomach, but she did not lose her strength. She observed two Lenten seasons in each year--the