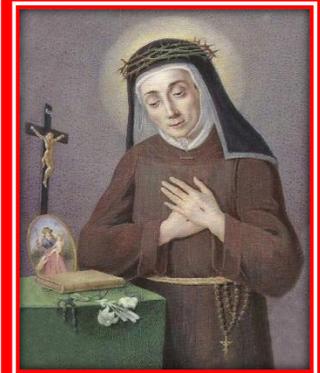


Daily Saints - 6 October



Feast of Saint Mary Frances of the Five Wounds of Jesus

Born: 25 March 1715 Naples, Kingdom of Naples **Died:** 7 October 1791 Naples, Kingdom of Naples **Venerated in** Roman Catholic Church (Third Order of St. Francis and Naples, Italy) **Beatified:** 12 November 1843, Rome, Papal States, by Pope Gregory XVI **Canonized:** 29 June 1867, Rome, Papal States, by Pope Pius IX **Major shrine:** Shrine of St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, Naples, Italy **Feast:** October 6 **Patronage:** Quartieri Spagnoli of Naples (co-patron); Gallo World Family Foundation; expectant mothers; women seeking to have children

St Mary Frances of the Five Wounds of Jesus was born in Naples, Italy on the 25th day of March 1715. Her parents were Francesco Gallo and Barbara Basinsin. Saint John Joseph of the Cross and Saint Francis de Geronimo both predicted Mary France's sanctity even before she was born. She was baptized with the name Anna Maria (Gallo) at the local Parish Church.

His father was said to be a severe and greedy man, who allegedly had a fiery temper, and from him, the saint and her mother had very much to suffer. He subjected them to ill-treatment and excessively hard work, which caused them both health issues. However, her mother, Barbara Basinsin, was a gentle and pious person who was patient in bearing with the brutal conduct of her husband.

It is said that she should be no longer able to nourish the child herself through breastfeeding, and she was therefore obliged to hire a person to breastfeed for her (a wet nurse). Apparently, the woman who took the position concealed from the parents that she was no longer producing milk, and the child began losing weight quickly. The nurse was changed, yet still, the child's health did not improve and became worse each day, to the extent that she was soon reduced to skin and bone.

Full of the most bitter sorrow at this sight, and not knowing any other person to whom she could entrust her child, the mother took her in arms, and with tears in her eyes she presented her before an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, saying: "My Mother, You

who are so powerful through Your Son, I beg of You to obtain for me the favor of being able to nurse my own child."

She then placed her hand on the sacred image and behold! from that night she was to breastfeed her little Anna-Maria, all thanks be to God through His Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Thanks much in part to the spiritual guidance of her pious mother, from a young age little Anna-Maria showed herself to be a devout and disciplined soul, especially noteworthy in the practice of devotions and her desire to always please God. Saint Mary Frances was scarcely 4 years old when she began to spend hours in prayer and sometimes arose at night for this purpose. Such was her desire to know the truths of the Catholic Faith, that an angel appeared to her and instructed her regularly.

Saint Mary Frances had not yet attained her 7th year when she desired to receive Holy Communion. Her pastor marveled at her knowledge of the Faith, as well as her ardent desire for the Bread of Angels, and felt that he could not deny her the privilege. In fact, it was not long before he permitted her to receive daily.

Meanwhile, although physically of a very delicate constitution, the little saint was making herself useful to her parents by assisting them in their work. Her father, a weaver of gold lace, was anxious to have his children help as early as possible. He found that Saint Mary Frances was not only the most willing but also the most skilled in the work. Mary Frances was 16 years old when a rich young man asked her father for her hand. Rejoicing at the favorable prospect, her father at once gave his consent.

But when he told Mary Frances about it, he was amazed to hear her, who had never contradicted him, declare her firm intention of espousing only her heavenly Bridegroom, and asking his permission to become a Tertiary. He became so enraged that he seized a rope and whipped the delicate girl unmercifully until her mother intervened. He then locked her in a room, where she received only bread and water, and no one was permitted to speak to her.

Saint Mary Frances considered herself fortunate to be able to offer her divine bridegroom this early proof of her fidelity; she regarded the trial as a pre-nuptial celebration. The earnest representations of a priest made her father, who after all was a believing Christian, realize that he had done wrong; and he consented that his daughter takes the Tertiary habit and serves God as a consecrated virgin at home, as was customary in those days.

Filled with holy joy, Saint Mary Frances now received the habit and with it the surname "of the Five Wounds." This name was prophetic of her subsequent life.

At home, Saint Mary Frances had much to endure. Her father never got over it that he lost a wealthy son-in-law. When God favored her with unusual graces -- she was sometimes granted ecstasies at prayer and suffered our Lord's agony with Him -- her own brothers and sisters insulted her as an imposter. Even her confessor felt obliged to

deal harshly with her. For a long time, she could find consolation nowhere but in the wounds of Christ.

At last her confessor perceived that it was God who was doing these things in Mary Frances. Since her mother had died meanwhile, he saw to it that she found a home with a fellow Tertiary. There one day, as she herself lay ill, she learned that her father was near death; and she asked almighty God to let her suffer her father's death agony and his purgatory. Both requests were granted her.

Although she suffered continuously, our Lord also gave Mary Frances great graces and consolations. She received the marks of the wounds of Christ and was granted the gift of prophecy and of miracles. When Pius VI was crowned pope in 1775, she beheld him in a vision wearing a crown of thorns. Pope Pius closed his life 24 years later as a prisoner of the French Revolution at Valence.

Mary Frances also prophesied the tragic events of the French Revolution; and God heard her prayer, asking that she be taken from this world before they would happen. **She died on October 6, 1791, kissing the feet of her crucifix.**