

القديسة أكويلينا - - Saint Aquilina



St. Aquilina's Feast Day is celebrated on June 13.

It is believed that Aquilina was born in the third century, in the Phoenician City of Byblos, which is current-day Jbeil, in Lebanon. When she was only twelve years old, she persuaded a friend to convert to Christ through her example and teachings. One of the servants of Governor Volusian accused her of teaching others to reject paganism. She was taken before the governor where she firmly confessed her belief and said that she would not renounce her faith in Jesus Christ. Volusian tried to influence her through persuasion and flattery, but seeing her confidence, he ordered her to be tortured.

She was struck in the face, and then stripped and flogged. Heated metal rods were then drilled through her ears, and St. Aquilina collapsed. The torturers thought that she had actually died, and gave orders that her body be thrown outside the city to be eaten by wild dogs. However, later that night, an angel appeared to Aquilina, saying: "Arise and be healed. Go and denounce Volusian, so that he and his plans may come to nothing."

Aquilina regained consciousness and went before the Magistrate, who sentenced her to be decapitated in the morning, saying that she was a sorceress who refused his imperial decrees. The next day she was found dead in her cell. The Christians buried her body outside the city where her tomb became a site for pilgrimage and cures.

Later, her relics were transported to Constantinople where a great basilica was built in her honor near the Forum of Constantine.