

As soon as Blessed Fina died, the angels started ringing all the church bells in St. Gimignano. When this miracle happened, those who lived at the Castle of St. Gimignano, ran to Fina's room and with great solemnity, carried her body to the castle church. During this time, they also noticed that a beautiful odour came from the body of Fina – this odour is called the odour of sanctity!

In the same hour that Blessed Fina died, because she had gone to Heaven, the devil showed his anger by causing a great whirlwind and a rainstorm. And this frightened many of the people of St. Gimignano.

During the time when Fina's body was laid out in the church, many miracles happened.

Monna, one of Fina's servants, had a crippled hand that was useless. She prayed near the body of Fina and suddenly Fina lifted her dead arm and grasped Monna's hand. Monna's hand was instantly cured; she was no longer crippled! Another lady suffered from a terrible pain in her knee. She went up to Fina's body and when somebody placed Fina's hand on her knee; she too was instantly cured!

Fina's body lay for many days in the church of St. Gimignano, and finally it was carried to the place of burial. When Fina's body was removed from the oak board, God caused beautiful flowers, which gave off a wonderful perfume, to grow out of the board where she had lain! At this time, many people from castles, towns and villages came to honour holy Fina. Many of these people brought beautiful cloths of gold, and candles of pure bee's wax, to place before her tomb.

Many people were cured during this time; crippled people could again use their arms and legs, and those with palsy were cured and made whole. People, who could not talk, were also cured and those who were possessed by devils were delivered, and the devils left them.

And miracles also happened in other parts of the country. Sailors who were in storms at sea were saved by calling on Blessed Fina. People who were about to die from some terrible illness, were suddenly cured. But the greatest miracles that happened were that people who had died of illness or old age, suddenly returned to life. Fina cured all ills that people had – no matter what!

Ask Blessed Fina to make you holy like she was and ask her to help others as well, especially the sick and the dying.

*(Excerpted from: www.sspcx.ca)

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Saint Fina of San Gimignano

Feast Day: March 12



Patronage:

Physically Challenged People

Saint Fina of San Giminiano

*Saint Fina is a wonderful little saint, and her short life is very interesting. Fina became like the finest gold, in all the virtues, especially the beautiful virtues of purity and humility. During her life she rose higher and higher in virtue until the time of her death, when she came face to face with Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Fina lived in the town of St. Giminiano, Italy, a village in Tuscany, Italy where she was born in 1238. She was born Fina del Ciardi, and was the daughter of the imperiera, a declined noble family.. As a child, she avoided all temptations that could destroy her soul, and she let herself be guided by the light and grace of the Holy Ghost. While she was still a child, she avoided all conversation that would be a cause of sin. She never ran and jumped about like children so often do, and she guarded her heart against liking fine clothes and worldly joys. In this way Fina lived like a hermit, in her own home, except when she would go to Mass or the Divine Office or other services at the church.

She avoided going out into the world for any unnecessary reason, in order to keep her peace of mind. And when she did go out, she would walk with her eyes looking down, so that by not looking around, she would not be tempted to sin.

Saint Fina was a tall beautiful girl. She never wore any makeup or jewelry. She wanted only to please God and not worldly man. She often fasted, eating little food, and for penance she wore a hair shirt. When she was not praying, she kept herself busy doing woman's work, so as not to remain idle. She knew that idle hands and an idle mind could be used by the devil, and she avoided this at all costs.

In order to test her virtues, Jesus allowed Fina to become very sick for the last five years of her life. The disease she got was called palsy, and because of it, she was unable to move her hands, feet, arms or legs. God did allow her to be able to move her head, but that was all! Fina would not allow herself the pleasure of lying in a soft bed while she was sick. Instead, she lay upon a hard, oak board. She lay on one side of her body only, as the other side was weaker. The flesh on this side of her body became corrupted and was eaten away by vermin.

And worse yet, rats gathered together to eat her flesh, and she was unable to chase them away! The poor girl suffered on both sides of her body, but she never complained or cried out, because of the terrible pain! She was always joyful and always gave thanks to God, and she grew in the beautiful virtue of patience, from day to day.

Saint Fina was very poor and she loved her poverty. Often, good hearted people would bring her food and other necessary things. If they brought her too many things she would weep, but if they brought her only a few things she would beam with joy! And she would only keep that which was necessary for that day alone – the rest she would give to the poor.

The devil hated Saint Fina because she was so virtuous. He thought that a way to get back at her for being so holy, would be to attack her mother. One day her mother Imperiera, was returning from church. Just as she got to the doorstep, she fell to the ground – she was dead. Fina heard her mother cry out as she fell, so she called her servant Bonaventura to go and see what happened to her mother. Bonaventura ran down the stairs and finding Imperiera lying on the ground, she cried out, *"Woe is me! Woe is me, Fina! Thy mother is lying dead upon the doorstep!"* When Saint Fina heard the sad news, she lifted her eyes to Heaven. As she was looking out the window, she suddenly noticed a huge, long snake, lying on the beam of the roof. She called to her servant, *"Come upstairs Bonaventura, and you will see the wicked monster that has killed my mother. Go quickly and get Mr. Guglielmo to climb the roof and catch the snake that bit my mother!"* When Mr. Guglielmo arrived, he asked Fina where the snake was. She told him the snake was lying on a certain beam but neither he nor Bonaventura could see the snake. Then Fina realized that this was no servant she made the sign of the cross, and the snake disappeared! Fina knew that God had permitted the death of her good mother, so she did not weep, but remained patient and gave thanks to God, whose will is best.

Through her prayers and sacrifices, God granted Fina the grace to know when she was going to die. She was devoted to Pope St. Gregory and he appeared to her eight days before her death. When he appeared he said, *"Dear daughter, make your peace with Jesus Christ, as you did in the beginning, for on the Feast of St. Gregory, you will die, and God will reward you for your penances and sacrifices!"*

Then Saint Fina lifted up her eyes to God and gave Him thanks saying, *"You, O Lord, have called Your most unworthy handmaid to Heaven, where there is everlasting joy and where You will give me a place beside You."*

Then Fina bowed her head to St. Gregory and begged him to pray for her, and he disappeared. Two of her servants were there at the time of the vision, and she told them not to tell anybody about the vision, as long as she was alive.

After the vision of St. Gregory, Fina began to grow much weaker and she suffered great pains in her head. She continued to suffer for the love of God, and on March 12th, 1253, St. Gregory's Feast Day; she made a general confession in the morning and received Holy Communion. Then while she was offering her pure soul to God, she died, and angels carried her pure soul to Heaven.