

Blessed Michelina (Metelli Malatesta) of Pesaro

1300-1356

Michelina of Pesaro was born in Pesaro in 1300. At the age of 12 she married one of the Malatesta, a noble family of Pesaro. In 1320 she was widowed and shortly afterwards lost her only son. Helped by the blessed Soriana she overcame this painful trial and became a Third Order Franciscan.

Out of love for Christ she donated to the poor all of her wealth and committed herself to a life of austere penance and prayer. Along with Blessed Cecco she founded the Confraternity of the Most Holy Annunciation to serve the poor, nurse the sick, and bury the dead. Several times the Lord spoke to her from the cross. She died on the 19th of June in 1356.

Having barely arrived at the foot of the altar, in front of an image of the Virgin with Child, she heard the Lord say to her: "Your son will be seated at my right hand and I will call him my brother; and to you yourself I will give the name of my mother."

A few days later, her son died. At the moment in which she was bestowing her



The conversion of Michelina of Pesaro was notably radical. A young widow of one of the Malatesta family, she began to lead a worldly social life with the hope of remarrying. At least that is the pretext which she invented so that she could make herself giddy from amusement and parties, neglecting her spiritual life. Several years passed. One day, her only son, whom she loved tenderly, fell gravely ill. Michelina thought: life is short, pleasures are fleeting, what do they represent in comparison to eternal salvation? Along with her chambermaid, Syra, a very pious woman, she prayed at the bedside of her dying son, "My God, so that I may be certain to find my son close to you, I will then renounce all the vanity of the world!" Hoping for a miracle, she went with Syra to a church to implore the Blessed Mother.

last kiss on his forehead, she felt the start of a rebellion. But all of a sudden, the room was filled with light and she saw two Angels dressed in dazzling white gathering up on their wings of fire the soul of her son to bring him in front of the throne of God. This vision provoked in her a radical conversion: she sold all her goods, gave the proceeds to the poor, and became a Franciscan Tertiary. Her family had her locked up as insane, but she persevered in her vocation, supported by her Guardian Angel. Finally liberated, she made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land as a penance for her past life. She returned with the stigmata – bearing the wounds of Christ. She died in 1356, at about the age of fifty, and veneration to her was promulgated in 1737.