

Saint Ludwina of Schiedam

1380-1433

Saint Ludwina, a Dutch virgin, is famous for the admirable patience with which she endured her painful infirmities for more than 30 years. She always lived in a profound communion with her Guardian Angel.

Often her Guardian Angel came to visit her in the company of other Angels, who had the semblances of adolescent youth. On their foreheads they had the impression of a cross which emanated light; their face was one of beauty and luminosity similar to that of the sun. When these celestial spirits stayed near the Saint, her sufferings would cease, and she would feel an unspeakable joy and she saw herself transported to Heaven. To all who came to visit her, she strove to inspire a tender devotion towards their own Guardian Angels. The graces and favors which she received thanks to her Angel were very numerous. Often her Angel would take her to visit Purgatory, to sensitize her to the sufferings which tormented the purging souls, and to motivate her to increase the fervor with which she prayed and sacrificed for them. One day she was led to contemplate the glory of which the souls of Paradise enjoyed. Another time her Angel brought her to Jerusalem and had her visit the places sanctified by the sufferings of Jesus. Here, because of a special privilege, she felt the same pains which Our Lord felt in the various circumstances of his Passion. When the celestial guide was to transport her someplace, she was taken by the hand and led first to the church of Saint John the Baptist in front of the altar of the Holy Virgin in order to honor her, and then she was led to the places where the Lord wanted her to visit. One day the widow Catherine Simon, who attended to her and was aware of her mystical gifts, revealed to Ludwina the great desire she had to see her own Angel. The Saint

instructed her to kneel and she told her: "Here is the Angel that you desire to see." One of the biographers of Ludwina, H.K. Huysmans, describes in great detail this event: "An Angel appeared in the room of the Saint under the semblance of an adolescent with a garment that seemed to have fabric woven of white flames." The woman was not capable of saying a single word to express her joy. Then Saint Ludwina asked the Angel: "My brother, would you allow this sister of mine to contemplate



the glory of your eyes even if only for a single instant?" The Angel consented and looked at the woman who was so shaken by this vision that for several days she was able to neither sleep nor eat because of the emotional excitement. The Saint often told her friends: "I know not one affliction or discomfort that a singular glance from my Angel does not cause to dissipate; his glance acts like the rays of the sun which in the morning dissipate every obscurity." Frequently the Saint heard celestial music together with the voices of the Angels.