

St. Bertilla Boscardin



Anna Francesca Boscardin was born October 6, 1888 in Brendola, Italy. She lived a very difficult childhood in a poor peasant family with a violently abusive alcoholic father. She had very little education, and worked as a house servant as a girl and was considered not to be very intelligent. Her family nicknamed her “the goose” due to her lack of intelligence.

However, things changed somewhat when she entered the Sisters of Saint Dorothy, Daughters of the Sacred Heart in 1904, taking the name Bertilla. After working in the convent’s kitchen and laundry for three years, she trained as a nurse.

She worked in the children’s ward of the sisters’ hospital in Treviso, and quickly became the children’s favorite due to her simple and gentle way. She cared for wounded Italian soldiers during World War I, even staying with patients while the area was being bombed.

An envious supervisor reassigned Bertilla, now popular among the patients, to the hospital laundry. When her mother-general heard of this, she made Bertilla head of the children’s ward in 1919. Bertilla died three years later of cancer.

She was canonized in 1961 by Pope John XXIII before a crowd that included many of her former patients, and many miracles have been reported at her tomb.