

Saint Lucy the Virgin-Martyr (283-304), also known as **Saint Lucia**, was born in Syracuse, Sicily and was martyred for the Christian faith in the persecution of Emperor Diocletian around the year 304 AD. Her feast day is celebrated on December 13. There is no doubt of the great veneration that was shown to St. Lucy by the early church.

Lucy was born of rich and noble parents about the year 283. Her father was of Roman origin, but his early death left her dependent upon her mother, whose name, Eutychia, seems to indicate that she came of Greek stock. Lucy secretly consecrated her virginity to God, and distributed her wealth to the poor. Since she refused to marry a pagan, the rejected suitor denounced her to the prefect Paschasius as a Christian, and she was arrested.

She was first of all condemned to suffer the shame of prostitution; but in the strength of God she stood immovable, so that they could not drag her away to the place of shame, and thus she preserved her purity. Then the pagans attempted to burn her alive, and heaped bundles of wood about her and set them on fire, and again God saved her. Finally, she was killed by a sword thrust to the throat, and so she gave her spirit up to God.