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Eucharistic Mystics and Martyrs

"WHEN THE SISTERS ARE EXHAUSTED, UP TO THEIR EYES IN WORK, WHEN ALL SEEMS TO GO AWRY, THEY SPEND AN HOUR IN PRAYER BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT. THIS PRACTICE HAS NEVER FAILED TO BEAR FRUIT: THEY EXPERIENCE PEACE AND STRENGTH." (ST TERESA OF CALCUTTA)



BL. ALEXANDRINA MARIA DA COSTA, PORTUGAL (1904 - 1955)



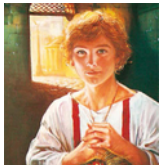
Paralysed and bedridden by age 21 following a severe fall and irreversible injuries in her teenage years, Alexandrina experienced the 3 hour Passion of Jesus every Friday for 4 years, before receiving her new mission from Jesus Himself: to survive on the Eucharist alone for the last 13 years of her life. Medical tests could not account for her health or survival, but Jesus said to her: *"You are living by the Eucharist alone because I want to prove to the world the power of the Eucharist and the power of my life in souls."*

VENERABLE MARTHE ROBIN, FRANCE (1902 - 1981)



With a strong draw to prayer from early childhood, but weakened from an early age by typhoid and later painful and debilitating illnesses, Marthe was eventually bedridden through paralysis of her legs and also her digestive tract which left her unable to eat or drink. The only food she could consume was the Eucharistic host, and she survived for the last 51 years of her life on the Eucharist alone, taking no other food or drink. The Eucharist was for her *"the one thing that cures, comforts, lifts, blesses, my Everything."*

ST TARCISIUS (3RD CENTURY ROME)



12 year old Tarcisus was beaten to death by his peers for being a Christian, when secretly bringing the Eucharist to imprisoned Christians in the Colliseum awaiting death. Tarcisus fought to protect the Eucharist from his attackers to the last of his strength until he fell unconscious. A Roman soldier who was a Christian came on the scene and took Tarcisus to the Catacombs where he died, and was venerated as a martyr.

FR MAURICE KINRECHTIN, CLONMEL D. 1585



Imprisoned in Clonmel jail for a year before a temporary release to spend one evening at Easter at the house of Victor White, a local Catholic, Fr Maurice prepared to celebrate Mass on Easter Sunday morning for Catholics in the area. However the occasion was used to try to ensnare him and others. He escaped with others, but Victor White was imprisoned and sentenced to death for refusing to give up the whereabouts of Fr Maurice. Fr Maurice surrendered himself, having heard of Victor's plight, and was imprisoned and tortured for refusing to give up his faith. Dragged through the streets of Clonmel on a hurdle and hanged, he was taken down half-way through and beheaded, and his head placed on a spike outside the jail as a warning. However, it served rather to instill hope and faith of the locals in the Sacrifice of the Mass instead.

ST MARGARET CLITHEROW, ENGLAND • 1555 – 1586



Well-liked and generously serving, when Margaret was imprisoned for the crime of hiding priests, she refused to compromise her beliefs or her commitment to sheltering priests in secret, despite knowing what fate awaited her. Margaret was crushed to death by heavy weights, with a sharp rock under her back which ensured her back snapped and left her in agonising pain as she waited for death to come from crushing. Her last words were *"Jesu, Jesus, have mercy on me."*



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"WHEN YOU APPROACH THE TABERNACLE, REMEMBER THAT HE HAS BEEN WAITING FOR YOU FOR TWENTY CENTURIES."
(ST JOSE MARIA ESCRIVA)

FR RAGHEED GANNI, 1972 - 2007 (IRAQ)



Fr Ragheed studied in Rome and spent many summers working on the pilgrim island of Lough Derg. After his ordination he returned to his homeland of Mosul, Iraq where the Islamic State were terrorising and murdering Christians. *"There are days when I feel frail and full of fear. But when, holding the Eucharist, I say, 'Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,' I feel His strength in me. When I hold the Host in my hands, it is really He who is holding me and all of us, challenging the terrorists and keeping us all united in His boundless love."* Despite threats and demands he refused to leave his people, or close his Church, and on Trinity Sunday 2007 along with three subdeacons he was executed in cold-blood outside his Church. His last words were: *"How can I close the House of God?"*

FULTON SHEEN AND THE LITTLE CHINESE MARTYR FOR THE EUCHARIST



Archbishop Fulton Sheen spoke of the inspiration behind his TV-mission which reached millions: a little Chinese girl, martyred for the Eucharist in Communist China in the 1950s. Refusing to obey the belligerent commander's order to throw crucifixes and pictures torn down from the school walls into the toilet at the back of the room, she was dragged to the local Church where the troops forced open the tabernacle, threw the ciborium on the ground and trampled on the hosts in an effort to crush the locals' beliefs in what they called "fairytales". After they put the priest on house arrest and stationed a guard at the chapel door, the little girl sneaked in quietly for 32 nights, made a Holy Hour and reverently bowed down received one host on her tongue from the ground each night. On the 33rd night, making a noise as she left, the little girl was discovered and beaten to death with the butt of a rifle. The priest was forced to flee the country and brought the inspirational story of this little girl to the shores of America, where Fulton Sheen was so inspired that he never missed making a Holy Hour each day for 60 years of his priesthood. *"The greatest love story of all time is contained in a tiny white Host."*

ST JOHN PAUL II



Losing his mother at age 8, his brother at age 14 and finally his father at age 21, Karol Wojtyla was left alone in the world to face Nazism, and then Communism which he eventually helped to topple. Travelling more than three times the distance of the earth to the sun in his life-time and carrying the Church through decades, John Paul II revealed his secret: *"The Eucharist is the secret of my day. It gives strength and meaning to all my activities of service to the Church and to the whole world."*

Known to spend vast amounts of time in adoration, efforts were frequently made on visits to keep the Pope from the chapel so as not to derail the schedule, as happened in a Maryland seminary when Fr Tucci ordered all the doors in the corridor to be kept closed, since they were identical and the Pope could pass through without noticing the chapel. However, as Pope John Paul II made his way through the hallway, he stopped outside one closed door, wagged his finger at Fr Tucci and entered the chapel to pray.

- *"Jesus waits for us in this Sacrament of Love."*
- *"Mass constitutes the centre of my life and the centre of my day."*

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