

January 21, 2024

The stories go on to explain that another man presided over Agnes' trial after Sempronius excused himself. The new man sentenced Agnes to death. At first, Agnes was tied to a stake, but either the wood would not burn or the flames parted away from her. This prompted an officer to draw his sword and behead the girl. It is believed that her blood, which poured out to the stadium, was soaked up with cloths by Christians.

Agnes died a virgin-martyr at the age of 12 or 13 on 21 January 304 and was buried beside the Via Nomentana in Rome. Her bones are currently conserved beneath the high altar in the church of Sant'Agnese fuori le mura in Rome, which was built over the catacomb that held her tomb. Her skull is preserved in the church of Sant'Agnese in Agone in Rome's Piazza Navona.

“Today is the birthday of a virgin; let us imitate her purity. It is the birthday of a martyr; let us offer ourselves in sacrifice. It is the birthday of Saint Agnes, who is said to have suffered martyrdom at the age of twelve. The cruelty that did not spare her youth shows all the more clearly the power of faith in finding one so young to bear it witness.

There was little or no room in that small body for a wound. Though she could scarcely receive the blow, she could rise superior to it. Girls of her age cannot bear even their parents' frowns and, pricked by a needle, weep as for a serious wound. Yet she shows no fear of the blood-stained hands of her executioners. She stands undaunted by heavy, clanking chains. She offers her whole body to be put to the sword by fierce soldiers. She is too young to know of death, yet is ready to face it. Dragged against her will to the altars, she stretches out her hands to the Lord in the midst of the flames, making the triumphant sign of Christ the victor on the altars of sacrilege. She puts her neck and hands in iron chains, but no chain can hold fast her tiny limbs.

A new kind of martyrdom! Too young to be punished, yet old enough for a martyr's crown; unfitted for the contest, yet effortless in victory, she shows herself a master in valour despite the handicap of youth. As a bride she would not be hastening to join her husband with the same joy she shows as a virgin on her way to punishment, crowned not with flowers but with holiness of life, adorned not with braided hair but with Christ himself.

In the midst of tears, she sheds no tears herself. The crowds marvel at her recklessness in throwing away her life untasted, as if she had already lived life to the full. All are amazed that one not yet of legal age can give her testimony to God. So she succeeds in convincing others of her testimony about God, though her testimony in human affairs could not yet be accepted. What is beyond the power of nature, they argue, must come from its creator.

What menaces there were from the executioner, to frighten her; what promises made, to win her over; what influential people desired her in marriage! She answered: “To hope that any other will please me does wrong to my Spouse. I will be his who first chose me for himself. Executioner, why do you delay? If eyes that I do not want can desire this body, then let it perish.” She stood still, she prayed, she offered her neck.

You could see fear in the eyes of the executioner, as if he were the one condemned; his right hand trembled, his face grew pale as he saw the girl's peril, while she had no fear for herself. One victim, but a twin martyrdom, to modesty and to religion; Agnes preserved her virginity, and gained a martyr's crown.” — *From a treatise On Virgins by Saint Ambrose, bishop*



*Saint Joseph's  
Traditional Roman Catholic Chapel  
Traditional Latin Mass*

*29968 County 22  
Harmony, Minnesota 55939*

**Sunday, January 21**

**Confessions 12:30 pm**  
**Holy Mass 1:00 pm**

**3rd Sunday after Epiphany**

(St. Agnes, VM)

**Sunday, January 28**

**Confessions 12:30 pm**  
**Holy Mass 1:00 pm**

**Septuagesima Sunday**

(St. Peter Nolasco; St. Agnes VM)

**St. Joseph's Church Financial Statement**

Average Weekly Operating Costs: \$590

Average 2023 Weekly Collection (year-to-date): \$744

Average 2024 Weekly Collection (year-to-date): \$685

**Last Four Collections: 12/24 \$853 12/31 \$821 1/7 \$1,370 1/14 \$0**

**The Feast of St. Agnes**

*(January 21)*

**CONTACTS:**

Most Rev. Mark Pivarunas, CMRI (402) 571-4404

Fr. Carlos Borja (405) 473-4343 [fr.carlosborja@gmail.com](mailto:fr.carlosborja@gmail.com)

Fr Nino Molina (320) 266-4914 [frnmolina13@gmail.com](mailto:frnmolina13@gmail.com)

St. Joseph's Church (402) 332-7609 [www.saintjosephofharmony.org](http://www.saintjosephofharmony.org)

**MASS INTENTIONS** may be submitted to Father for a stipend of \$25.00. If you wish a specific date, please submit well in advance. Mass Intention envelopes are available in the vestibule.

**MEAL VOLUNTEERS:** There is a sign up sheet in the vestibule for the month of January to help provide Father with a meal-to-go after Mass. *Thank You* to all those who have been assisting with this Corporal Work of Mercy to feed the hungry; and supporting your parish priest.

**PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND** for May of 2024 is being coordinated by Fr. Benedict Hughes. Please see flyer in the vestibule and contact Fr. Benedict if interested.

**POTLUCK!:** As it is the third Sunday of month today, we will be having a potluck downstairs after Mass. Please come join us!

**CHAIR OF UNITY PRAYERS** is prayed for eight days, beginning with the feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> and concludes on the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle on Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>. The faithful are encouraged to recite these prayers during the Octave for the conversion of all unbelievers to the Catholic Faith.

**FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION** is on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. As a part of the Liturgy there will be the blessing of candles on this day at St. Joseph's Church, which is also a First Friday. If you would like some for your home, the suggested donation is \$7 for a box of two candles.

St. Agnes of Rome was born in 291 AD and raised in a Christian family. Agnes was very beautiful and belonged to a wealthy family. Her hand in marriage was highly sought after, and she had many high ranking men chasing after her. However, Agnes made a promise to God never to stain her purity. Her love for the Lord was great and she hated sin even more than death!

Whenever a man wished to marry Agnes, she would always say, "Jesus Christ is my only Spouse."

According to legend, the young men she turned away became so angry and insulted by her devotion to God and purity that they began to submit her name to authorities as a Christian follower.

In one incident, Procop, the Governor's son, became very angry when she refused him. He tried to win her for his wife with rich gifts and promises, but the beautiful young girl kept saying, "I am already promised to the Lord of the Universe. He is more splendid than the sun and the stars, and He has said He will never leave me!"

In great anger, Procop accused her of being a Christian and brought her to his father, the Governor. The Governor promised Agnes wonderful gifts if she would only deny God, but Agnes refused. He tried to change her mind by putting her in chains, but no chains could hold her tiny limbs.

Next he sent her to a place of sin, but an Angel protected her. At last, she was condemned to death. Even the pagans cried to see such a young and beautiful girl going to death. Yet, Agnes was as happy as a bride on her wedding day. She did not pay attention to those who begged her to save herself. "I would offend my Spouse," she said, "if I were to try to please you. He chose me first and He shall have me!" Then she prayed and bowed her head for the death-stroke of the sword.

Other accounts of Agnes' life hold the Prefect Sempronius responsible for her martyrdom. It is said he condemned the young girl to be dragged through the streets naked. Some versions of the legend state that Agnes' hair grew instantly to cover her entire body and all the men who attempted to rape the beautiful virgin were immediately struck blind.

