

LAY SAINTS

*The Noble and  
the Humble*



LAY SAINTS  
*The Noble and  
the Humble*

JOAN CARROLL CRUZ

TAN Books  
Charlotte, North Carolina

Copyright © 2016 TAN Books.

*Lay Saints: The Noble and the Humble* is a selection of saints biographies originally appearing in *Secular Saints* © 1989 by Joan Carroll Cruz. Revisions to the original biographies include updating of diction, punctuation, and spelling, along with the correction of occasional errors in typography, spelling, grammar, syntax, and factual information.

All rights reserved. With the exception of short excerpts used in articles and critical review, no part of this work may be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in any form whatsoever, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Cover design by David Ferris.

[www.davidferrisdesign.com](http://www.davidferrisdesign.com)

Cover image: *St. Louis Healing the Sick* (oil on canvas), Le Sueur, Eustache (1617-55) / Musee des Beaux-Arts, Tours, France / Bridgeman Images

ISBN: 978-0-89555-697-4

Printed in the United States of America.

TAN Books  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
[www.TANBooks.com](http://www.TANBooks.com)

2016

*This book is  
dedicated with love  
to  
The Holy Family*



# CONTENTS

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Author's Note . . . . . | xi   |
| Preface . . . . .       | xiii |

## ROYALS, RULERS AND NOBLES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1 Saint Adelaide . . . . .                      | 3  |
| 2 Blessed Amadeus IX . . . . .                  | 7  |
| 3 Saint Armogastes . . . . .                    | 11 |
| 4 Saint Boris and Saint Gleb . . . . .          | 13 |
| 5 Saint Casimir . . . . .                       | 19 |
| 6 Saint Dagobert II . . . . .                   | 23 |
| 7 Saint Edgar, King of England . . . . .        | 25 |
| 8 Saint Edward, the Boy King . . . . .          | 29 |
| 9 Saint Edward the Confessor . . . . .          | 33 |
| 10 Saint Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal . . . . . | 43 |
| 11 Saint Ethelbert . . . . .                    | 49 |
| 12 Blessed Ferdinand of Portugal . . . . .      | 51 |
| 13 Saint Ferdinand III of Castile . . . . .     | 57 |
| 14 Saint Gerald of Aurillac . . . . .           | 61 |
| 15 Saint Gotteschalc . . . . .                  | 63 |
| 16 Saint Guntramnus . . . . .                   | 67 |
| 17 Saint Hedwig . . . . .                       | 71 |

## LAY SAINTS—THE NOBLE AND THE HUMBLE

|    |  |     |
|----|--|-----|
| 18 | Saint Hedwig, Queen of Poland . . . . .      | 75  |
| 19 | Saint Henry II . . . . .                     | 81  |
| 20 | Blessed Isabella of France . . . . .         | 85  |
| 21 | Saint Ladislas . . . . .                     | 89  |
| 22 | Saint Leopold . . . . .                      | 93  |
| 23 | Saint Louis IX, King of France . . . . .     | 95  |
| 24 | Blessed Louis of Thuringia . . . . .         | 107 |
| 25 | Saint Olaf II . . . . .                      | 113 |
| 26 | Saint Olga . . . . .                         | 121 |
| 27 | Saint Oswin . . . . .                        | 123 |
| 28 | Blessed Pepin of Landen . . . . .            | 127 |
| 29 | Saint Pulcheria . . . . .                    | 131 |
| 30 | Saint Sigebert . . . . .                     | 139 |
| 31 | Saint Stephen, King of Hungary . . . . .     | 141 |
| 32 | Blessed Stilla . . . . .                     | 147 |
| 33 | Saint Tharsilla and Saint Emiliana . . . . . | 149 |
| 34 | Saint Vladimir . . . . .                     | 151 |
| 35 | Saint Wenceslas . . . . .                    | 159 |

## MEN AND WOMEN IN THE WORLD

|    |   |     |
|----|---|-----|
| 36 | Blessed Albert of Bergamo . . . . .     | 165 |
| 37 | Saint Benezet . . . . .                 | 169 |
| 38 | Saint Caesarius . . . . .               | 171 |
| 39 | Blessed Contardo Ferrini . . . . .      | 175 |
| 40 | Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian . . . . . | 179 |
| 41 | Saint Cuthman . . . . .                 | 183 |
| 42 | Saint Germaine Cousin . . . . .         | 185 |
| 43 | Saint Guy . . . . .                     | 191 |
| 44 | Blessed Henry the Shoemaker . . . . .   | 195 |
| 45 | Blessed Henry of Treviso . . . . .      | 197 |



## CONTENTS

|    |                                       |     |
|----|---------------------------------------|-----|
| 46 | Saint Homobonus . . . . .             | 201 |
| 47 | Saint Isidore the Farmer . . . . .    | 205 |
| 48 | Blessed Joan of Signa . . . . .       | 209 |
| 49 | Blessed John Storey . . . . .         | 211 |
| 50 | Saint Joseph Moscati . . . . .        | 215 |
| 51 | Blessed Josefa Naval Girbes . . . . . | 227 |
| 52 | Saint Marino . . . . .                | 229 |
| 53 | Saint Nicarete . . . . .              | 231 |
| 54 | Saint Notburga . . . . .              | 233 |
| 55 | Venerable Pauline Jaricot . . . . .   | 237 |
| 56 | Blessed Peter Tecelano . . . . .      | 249 |
| 57 | Saint Prosper of Aquitaine . . . . .  | 251 |
| 58 | Blessed Raymond Lull . . . . .        | 253 |
| 59 | Saint Saturus . . . . .               | 257 |
| 60 | Saint Theobaldus . . . . .            | 259 |
| 61 | Saint Zita . . . . .                  | 261 |
|    | Index of Saints . . . . .             | 265 |
|    | Bibliography . . . . .                | 279 |



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

**A** NATIONAL Catholic magazine polled a thousand of its readers to learn what they believe about the saints. The magazine reported that while news reports on the nation's Catholics have highlighted disagreements with traditional Church teachings, sixty-seven percent of the survey's respondents said they prayed to the saints as much, or more, than they did years ago. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents said they tried to imitate the lives of the saints.

Mentioned as the four favorite saints were the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Thérèse of Lisieux (the Little Flower). With the exception of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, who are in a unique category, we are left with a Franciscan brother and a Discalced Carmelite cloistered nun. While we can admire the virtues of St. Francis and St. Thérèse, the lifestyles of these two saints, and other saints of religious orders, are far removed, to say the least, from those of secular people.

Although the exact number of canonized saints is unknown, we know, of course, that the greater majority have been members of religious orders. We love them, we admire them, we wish to imitate them, but how can a mother with

## LAY SAINTS—THE NOBLE AND THE HUMBLE

small children, a wife with a difficult husband, a young bride with in-law problems—how can they really relate to the nun who lived in the quiet of a cloister, the nun who lived in a community where everyone shared the work of the house? How can they relate to the saints of religious orders whose lives were arranged in an orderly manner and who had designated times for quiet prayer and who had little or no financial problems? One might wonder if these saints of the cloister would have merited their titles if they had remained in the world to face the conflicts and dangers confronted by ordinary lay people.

It is profitable, of course, for laymen to love these saints, to pray to them and to imitate their virtues as much as they are able. But it seems that laymen would draw more encouragement to advance in prayer and virtue and would derive more consolation in their trials by examining the troubles and temptations of those saints who lived and died as secular members of the Church.

St. Teresa of Avila suggests that “we need to cultivate and think upon, and seek the companionship of those saints who, though living on earth like ourselves, have accomplished such great deeds for God.” Here, then, are the lives of secular saints who have, so to speak, “lived on earth like ourselves.” Represented here are single men and women, mothers and fathers, soldiers and servants, doctors and lawyers, the humble and the noble—all who have met the difficulties and challenges of the secular life and triumphed over them. Their virtues are to be admired, but most of all imitated. May we benefit from their example and from their prayers.

—Joan Carroll Cruz

# PREFACE

## A WORD ABOUT THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

A BOOK about secular saints would be incomplete without mentioning the pre-eminent model for secular people, the Blessed Mother. But what could be said here that has not been mentioned about her already in numerous biographies and devotional works? We have only to delve into these to find a solicitous and understanding mother, a kindly and generous friend, a consoling companion, and a ready and willing intercessor with God.

Although it is known that Mary was free from sin, full of grace, blessed among women and the fairest honor of our race, yet, as we know, she was not exempt from countless trials and hardships. She, who was the model of saints throughout the ages, should be the particular ideal of secular people, since Mary was an exemplary member of our secular ranks. She was, of course, a young bride, a young mother, a housekeeper, a widow. . . .

May this Immaculate Mother pray for us, that in our imitation of the saints, we can advance in virtue and eventually join her and her sainted children in our heavenly homeland.



LAY SAINTS  
*The Noble and  
the Humble*

*And he that invited thee and him, come and say to thee, Give this man place: and then thou begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when thou art invited, go, sit down in the lowest place; that when he who invited thee, cometh, he may say to thee: Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee. Because every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.*

—Luke 14:9–11





ROYALS, RULERS  
AND NOBLES



ONE

## SAINT ADELAIDE

D. 999

THE history of St. Adelaide (Adelheid) is dominated by the tenth-century power struggle and intrigue of certain parties for control of the kingdom of Italy. Adelaide was born into this struggle, being the daughter of Rudolph II, king of Burgundy, who was at war with Hugh of Provence for the Italian crown. In 933 the rivals reached a peace agreement by which it was stipulated that Adelaide, the daughter of one rival, should marry Lothaire, the son of the other rival. Adelaide was then only two years old. Fourteen years later her brother, Conrad of Burgundy, arranged the marriage and thereby fulfilled the contract. This marriage produced one child, a daughter, who was named Emma.

As a result of this marriage, Adelaide's husband, Lothaire, was considered the king of Italy. However, Berengarius, the marquis of Ivrea, came upon the scene and claimed the kingdom of Italy for himself. When Lothaire suddenly died in 950, it was suspected that he had been poisoned by Berengarius, who succeeded him. Berengarius then attempted to force the widow Adelaide to marry his son, Adalbert. When she refused, Berengarius treated her with brutality and kept her in almost solitary confinement in the Castle of Garda. From

## LAY SAINTS—THE NOBLE AND THE HUMBLE

there she was rescued by a priest named Martin, who is said to have dug a subterranean passage by which she escaped. Adelaide remained concealed in the woods until her friend Alberto Uzzo, the duke of Canossa, heard of the rescue and conveyed her to his castle.

While this was taking place, the Italian nobles, having grown weary of Berengarius, invited Otto the Great of Germany to invade and seize the country for himself. Otto met little resistance and promptly defeated Berengarius. To consolidate his authority in Italy, Otto married Adelaide at Pavia in the year 951. Adelaide had been a widow for one year and was twenty years younger than Otto. Of Adelaide's second marriage, five children were born: Otto II, Henry, Bruno and two daughters, who eventually became nuns.

Otto, it seems, had been married earlier to the daughter of Athelstan of England. Otto's son by this marriage, Rudolph, was jealous of the influence of his stepmother and her children and became a source of friction and rebellion. In spite of this, the German people accepted the gentle Adelaide and held her in the highest regard.

Berengarius once again instigated trouble in Italy, and when he finally invaded the states of the Church, Pope John XII appealed to Otto for help. When Otto took his forces across the Alps, Berengarius retreated. In 962 Otto was crowned emperor at Rome. Little is related about Adelaide for the following ten years, until the death of Otto the Great in 973 and the succession of her son Otto II.

During the reign of her son, trouble once again brought Adelaide to prominence. Although Otto II had many worthy traits, he permitted his wife, Theophania, and other counselors

## SAINT ADELAIDE

to turn him against his mother. Some suspect that the daughter-in-law resented Adelaide because of the saint's liberality to the poor. Because of the unpleasant atmosphere at court, Adelaide left and went to her brother, Conrad, at Vienna. She appealed to St. Majolus, abbot of Cluny, to effect a reconciliation. This was eventually brought about at Pavia—with her son asking pardon on his knees for his unkindness.

Trouble once more shadowed Adelaide when Otto II died and left as his successor his son, Otto III, who was then an infant. The child's mother, Theophania, assumed the duties of regent. With her troublesome daughter-in-law in complete control and as yet unreconciled, Adelaide again left the court. When Theophania died suddenly in 991, Adelaide was recalled to serve as regent in her place.

Adelaide's administration was dependent upon the wise guidance of Adalbert of Magdeburg, St. Majolus and St. Odilo of Cluny, who wrote about the saintly regent. These holy men reported that Adelaide was forgiving to her enemies and proved herself generous in her dealings. She founded and restored monasteries of monks and nuns, maintained a peaceful religious atmosphere at court, and was zealous in her attempts to convert the pagans of the northern and eastern frontiers.

When she was sixty-eight years of age, St. Adelaide died while on a journey to Burgundy to reconcile Rudolph III with his subjects. It was December 16, 999.

Although St. Adelaide is not mentioned in the *Roman Martyrology*, she is greatly revered in Germany, where her name appears on their calendars.