

MASS PROPER

September 4

BLESSED STELLA AND HER TEN COMPANIONS:

Sister M. Imelda

Sister M. Raymunda

Sister M. Daniela

Sister M. Kanuta

Sister M. Sergia

Sister M. Gwidona

Sister M. Felicita

Sister M. Heliodora

Sister M. Kanisia

Sister M. Boromea

Virgins and Martyrs

Obligatory Memorial

*In provinces or convents of CSFN, for whom this is a Patronal
Feast it is celebrated as a *Feast**

2000

September 4
Blessed Mary Stella and Her Ten Companions
Virgins and Martyrs

Obligatory Memorial

At the Easternmost end of the Republic of Poland in Nowogrodek (now Belarus), during the German invasion of World War II (1941-1943) eleven Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth unanimously expressed their desire to offer their lives in sacrifice for imprisoned family members who were destined to be executed, as well as for their chaplain and pastor of the Transfiguration Church (the Fara). Sister Stella, in the name of the community, shared the Sisters' prayers and decision: *O God, if sacrifice is needed, accept it from us...* God accepted their sacrifice. On August 1, 1943 they were taken and shot in the Nowojelski Forest by the Nazi. The imprisoned and the chaplain were spared.

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth arrived in Nowogrodek on September 4, 1929, and in spite of very challenging beginnings, were told by their superiors "to fearlessly withstand all difficulties because great things will take place there," and so they did. **Blessed Mary Stella and Her Ten Companions** fulfilled their Nazareth charism as given by God to their foundress Blessed Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd (Frances Siedliska) by serving families to a heroic degree. The Church presents them as models of love and defenders against the numerous dangers that are threatening the contemporary family.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon (or song)

The saints are happy in heaven because they followed Christ. They rejoice with him forever because they shed their blood for love of him.

Penitential Rite

Gloria (for Feasts)

Opening Prayer

O God, strength of the humble, who wonderfully sustained Blessed Mary Stella and her companions in martyrdom, grant, that by their intercession, that just as they shed their blood for the Faith, we too may remain faithful to you and to your Church until death. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ Your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

from the Book of Wisdom 3:1-9

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
and no torment shall touch them.

They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead;
and their passing away was thought an affliction

and their going forth from us, utter destruction.
But they are in peace.
For if to others, indeed, they seem punished,
yet is their hope full of immortality;
Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed,
because God tried them
and found them worthy of himself.
As gold in the furnace, he proved them,
and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.
In the time of their judgment they shall shine
and dart about as sparks through stubble;
They shall judge nations and rule over peoples,
and the LORD shall be their King forever.
Those who trust in him shall understand truth,
and the faithful shall abide with him in love:
Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,
and his care is with the elect.

The Word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm Ps. 124: 2-3. 4-5, 7-8

R. Our soul has escaped like a bird from the hunter's nest.

Had not the Lord been with us when men rose against us,
Then they would have swallowed us alive,
when their fury was inflamed against us.

R. Our soul has escaped like a bird from the hunter's nest.

Then would the waters have overwhelmed us;
The torrent would have swept over us.
Over us then would have swept the raging waters.

R. Our soul has escaped like a bird from the hunter's nest.

Broken was the snare, and we were freed.
Our help in is the name of the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.

R. Our soul has escaped like a bird from the hunter's nest.

Gospel Acclamation Verse

R. Alleluia! Alleluia!

We praise you, God; we acknowledge you as Lord;
The radiant army of martyrs acclaims you.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel

from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 10:28-33

Jesus said to his disciples: "And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are

not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father."

The Gospel of the Lord

Homily

General Intercessions

O God of mercy, love and compassion, through the merits of your Divine Son and through the intercession of the Blessed Martyrs, Mary Stella and her ten Nazareth Companions, hear the petitions of those who trust in your goodness and rely on you fatherly care and forgiveness.

Our response is:

R. Lord, grant us your love and mercy.

For our One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, that it may be strengthened in solid and lasting faith as it strives to live the tenants of the Good News, we pray...

R. Lord, grant us your love and mercy.

For our Holy Father, bishops and priests that their sharing of the Word of Christ and the Bread of Life be effective in all parts of the world, we pray...

R. Lord, grant us your love and mercy.

For the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth throughout the world that they may be faithful to the charism of their foundress, transmitting to all they meet the fruits of lived evangelical counsels, and for all religious in the Church, we pray...

R. Lord, grant us your love and mercy.

For families, relatives, friends, Associates of the Holy Family, that they may grow in faith, hope and love amidst their specific challenges in life, we pray...

R. Lord, grant us your love and mercy.

For leaders, administrators, staff, co-workers in institutions and ministries in society, that they may continue to develop family qualities of unity, fidelity, integrity and dignity, we pray...

R. Lord, grant us your love and mercy.

For children, the sick, suffering, poor, lonely and marginal people in the world that their needs may be met in loving, Christian ways, we pray...

R. Lord, grant us your love and mercy.

For true religious and priestly vocations in and for the service of the Church, we pray...

R. Lord, grant us your love and mercy.

O Most Blessed Trinity, we praise and thank you for the example of Blessed Mary Stella and Her Ten Companions, Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, who by imitating Jesus Christ, offered themselves as a sacrifice of love for others. Through the merits of their martyrdom and by their intercession, grant us the graces we ask, so that like them we may witness with our lives to the presence of the Kingdom of God's Love and extend it to the human family throughout the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Prayer over the Gifts

May the sacrifice soon to be consecrated
be acceptable to you, O Lord, we pray,
in commemoration of this precious martyrdom,
so that it may cleanse our sins
and commend to you the prayers of your servants.
Through Christ our Lord.

Eucharistic Prayer / Preface

- C./** The Lord is with you.
R./ And with your Spirit.
- C./** Lift up your hearts
R./ We lift them up to the Lord.
- C./** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

R./ It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For the blood of your blessed Martyrs Blessed Mary Stella
and Her Ten Companions,
poured out like Christ's to glorify your name,
shows forth your marvelous works,
by which in our weakness you perfect your power
and on the feeble bestow strength to bear you witness,
through Christ our Lord.

And so, with the Powers of heaven,
we worship you constantly on earth,
and before your majesty
without end we acclaim:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts . . .

COMMUNION RITE

Communion Antiphon

Greater love has no one
than to lay down his life for his friends, says the Lord.

Prayer after Communion

Grant us, O Lord, we pray,
that, being nourished by the Bread of heaven
and made one Body in Christ,
we may never be separated from his love
and, after the example of your holy Martyrs
Blessed Mary Stella and Her Ten Companions,
may bravely overcome all things
for the sake of him who loved us.
Who lives and reigns forever and ever.

CONCLUDING RITE

Solemn Blessing

C. God is the glory of all his saints, and of Blessed Mary Stella and Her Ten Companions, whose memory we celebrate today. May his blessing be with you always.

R. Amen.

C. May the prayers of Blessed Mary Stella and Her Ten Companions deliver you from present evil. May their example of holy living and courageous death turn your thoughts to the service of God and neighbor.

R. Amen.

C. God's holy Church rejoices that Blessed Mary Stella and Her Ten Companions have reached their heavenly goal, and are in everlasting peace. May you come to share all the joys of the Father's house.

R. Amen