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Seasoning the Seasons™

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Saint Lucy

Saint Lucy, Virgin & Martyr

Early in the morning on December 13th, especially in Scandinavian countries such as Sweden, it is common for the oldest daughter in the family to wear a white gown and red sash, with a wreath of candles on her head, and serve coffee and Lussekatter (saffron buns) to the household. It's the Feast Day of Santa Lucia, or Saint Lucy!



Saint Lucy lived in Syracuse on the island of Sicily, which is off the southern coast of Italy. Around the year 304, she was martyred (put to death for witnessing to her faith) at a very young age during a time when the Emperor Diocletian was persecuting Christians.

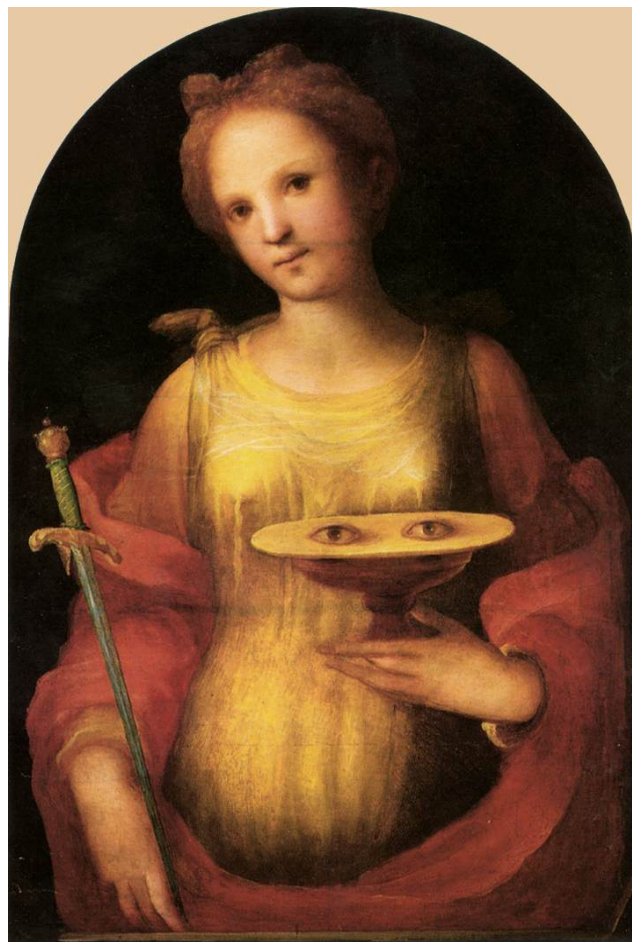
Still today, we hear Saint Lucy's name mentioned in Eucharistic Prayer I. But few details are known of her actual life. One legend says that during the persecution, Lucy's eyes were plucked out. That is why you will sometimes see statues or holy cards with Saint Lucy holding out a platter with eyeballs on it! (See this depicted on the next page.)

The Gospel for the Feast (Memorial) of Saint Lucy is Matthew 25:1-13 (The Parable of the Ten Virgins). In this parable, the five wise virgins went out to meet the Lord with their lamps lighted. Perhaps the five candles in the wreath on Lucy's head, as she is depicted on this page, represent those five faithful virgins!

Saint Lucy is the Patron Saint of those who are blind or suffer from eye diseases, as well as the island of Sicily.

You could have your own Lucia celebration on December 13th in your home,

school or parish. The oldest daughter in the family, or someone else chosen from the school or parish, could portray Saint Lucy. Other young girls could be her maidens, dressed in white gowns with wreaths of tinsel in their hair. The boys also dress in white gowns, but wear pointy hats with stars on them. They are called "Starboys." Why is everyone wearing white? Because that is the color of our baptismal garment! The red sash around Lucy's waist symbolizes that she died the death of a martyr. It is simple to find traditional recipes for Lussekatter, or you could even have Swedish pancakes. But however you celebrate, don't forget that it is Saint Lucy we are celebrating, and make sure that all year long you let the light of Jesus shine through you, just as the candlelight shines on Lucy's wreath!



Saint Lucy
Domenico Beccafumi, 1521