

SAINTS ALIVE! MARCH 7: SAINTS PERPETUA AND FELICITY



Perpetua was twenty-two when she was arrested with her servant Felicity for violating a prohibition against conversion to Christianity. Despite threats of persecution and death, Perpetua, Felicity and three companions refused to renounce their Christian faith.

At the time of her imprisonment, Perpetua was a married noblewoman and mother of an infant she was nursing. Her slave, Felicity, who was eight months pregnant, was imprisoned with her. Together they were martyred, but not before Felicity gave birth and handed over her newborn daughter to Christian friends.

Saints Perpetua and Felicity are patronesses of expectant mothers and mothers.

Single working mothers in Oregon are twice as poor as their fellow Oregonians. All women, not just single working mothers, continue the struggle to achieve economic rights equal to those conferred upon men.

Women's economic rights include the right to

- Equal pay for equal work: In Oregon, women are paid 78¢ for every dollar paid to men.
- Maternity leave: Only some workers, those in businesses with 25 or more employees, have a legal right to take *unpaid* leave for the birth or new adoption of a child.
- Motherhood: Mothers earn 60¢ for every dollar a father makes, while women without children earn 94¢ for every dollar childless men are paid.

Prayer:

Saints Perpetua and Felicity, hear the cries of women who have been the victims of violence, women who have been denied dignity, education, food, health, even life itself, because they are female. Empower us to be instruments of justice for all, for in the wholeness of Christ, we are all one. Amen.



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