

## Women of the Church Month 15

### St. Elizabeth of Hungary

St. Elizabeth of Hungary was born in 1207, a princess and medieval noblewoman. She was betrothed at an early age to be married to Louis of Thuringia, a German nobleman. She married Louis (age 21) when she was 14. They had a happy marriage, having three children.

Elizabeth was pious from her youth and her husband was very religious. Louis was a soldier; while he was away, Elizabeth devoted herself to works of charity. Her husband supported Elizabeth's works. Elizabeth met with friars of the Franciscan order during St. Francis' own lifetime and resolved to use her royal position to advance their mission of charity. She led a life of prayer and sacrifice and service to the sick and poor. Elizabeth arranged for a hospital to be built and provided for the needs of many poor in her area.

After being married for 6 years, Louis died (of illness) during the Crusades. Elizabeth was devastated by her husband's death. She vowed to never marry again. She took vows of celibacy and an agreement of complete obedience to her confessor and spiritual director, Mater Conrad of Marburg. His treatment of Elizabeth was strict and harsh, but she continued to keep her vows. Her children were taken away and cared for. She had another hospital built and personally attended to the care of the sick. She became a third Order Franciscan, seeking to live out the example of the order's founder.

A legend exists that as Elizabeth was secretly going to help the poor, she was unexpectedly met by her husband. The bread she was carrying turned into roses. She is often depicted carrying bread or roses in her apron. She is also represented as a queen distributing alms. Her choice to live a life of penance and asceticism, while she could have lived a life of leisure and luxury endeared her in the hearts of the common people throughout Europe although drew criticism from her husband's royal family.

After working with the sick, Elizabeth herself became ill. She died at the age of 24. Soon after her death, there were reports of miraculous healings at her grave site. St. Elizabeth's feast day is celebrated on November 17. She is the patron saint of bakers, brides, death of children, homeless people, hospitals, widows, Sisters of Mercy, Catholic charities and the secular Franciscan order.

References:

[www.catholicfaithpatronsaints.com/prayers-quips-quotes-st-elizabeth-of-hungary-feast-day-nov-17/](http://www.catholicfaithpatronsaints.com/prayers-quips-quotes-st-elizabeth-of-hungary-feast-day-nov-17/)

[www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=45](http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=45)

[www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-elizabeth-of-hungary/](http://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-elizabeth-of-hungary/)

## Reflections

-St. Elizabeth entrusted the care of her children to others, likely at the recommendation of her spiritual advisor, and then pursued joining a religious order. Although we do not know the details and wonder if this may have been acceptable in her time and culture, it does not seem like a choice many of us would make now. However, there are likely times in our lives where we feel we have to make some type of choice for the faith, and maybe between faith and family on some level.

How do you feel about all of this?

What would you consider in a decision you might have to make?

-Many healing miracles are said to have taken place at the gravesite of St. Elizabeth.

Why do you think these might occur at her gravesite in particular?

Imagine that you could receive a miracle of healing for something in your life or in the life of a loved one. What would it be?

-St. Elizabeth had a love for the poor and sick; she cared for and gave generously to them. She chose to do this, rather than take advantage of her nobility and wealth.

How/why do some people focus more on their own material goods and wealth, while others are more in tune to the needs of those who have little means and resources?

What are some new things we can all directly do to help those who are poor or sick?

## Prayers/Devotions

### Quotes:

“How could I bear a crown of gold when the Lord bears a crown of thorns? And bears it for me!”

“We are made loveless by our possessions.”

“As in heaven Your will is punctually performed, so may it be done on earth by all creatures, particularly in me and by me.”

### Prayers:

O God, by whose gift Saint Elizabeth of Hungary recognized and revered Christ in the poor, grant, through her intercession, that we may serve with unflinching charity the needy and those afflicted. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

(from The Roman Missal) <https://aleteia.org/daily-prayer/saturday-november-17/>

Dear Saint Elizabeth, you were always poor in spirit, most generous toward the poor, faithful to your husband, and fully consecrated to your Divine Bridegroom. Grant your help to widows and widowers and keep them faithful to their heavenly Lord. Teach them to make use of their time in the service of God our Lord. Amen.

<https://www.catholicfaithstore.com/daily-bread/prayers-to-saint-elizabeth-of-hungary/>

Here is a link to a novena for St. Elizabeth of Hungary:

<https://www.praymorenovenas.com/st-elizabeth-of-hungary-novenaPrayers/Devotions>

Here is a link to a litany to St. Elizabeth of Hungary

<http://catholicharboroffaithandmorals.com/Devotions%20to%20St.%20Elizabeth%20of%20Hungary.html>