

November 14
In the Diocese of Opole
BLESSED MARY LOUISE MERKERT, VIRGIN
Obligatory memorial
In the Archdioceses of Katowice and Wrocław – Optional memorial

Mary Louise (Maria Luiza) was born on 21 September 1817 in Nysa in the Opole Silesia region. In 1842 along with three inhabitants of Nysa, she founded the Congregation, whose main aim was to care for the sick and deserted in their own houses. She was known for her love for God and neighbours, great mercy toward the sick, poor, deserted and orphaned, in whom she saw the face of Christ. She focused her internal life on the prayer and devotion to the Eucharist, the Sacred Heart, Virgin Mary and Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, whom she chose as a patron saint the Congregation. She sensibly and fairly guided the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Elizabeth for 22 years. Exhausted with toils and illnesses, she died in the odour of sanctity on 14 November 1872.

Common of Virgins.

OFFICE OF READINGS

SECOND READING

From a circular letter of Blessed Mary Louise Merkert
(Documenti, Cap. X. 5, 12, 16, *Positio super virtutibus*, Roma 2002, pp. 504, 515, 516, 523-525)
To Do Much Good to All and to Love All in God

I am asking God to hear my humble prayer and give my beloved sisters all good in abundance. Above all, I wish you all peace with God, with one another and with neighbours. And if you are in this happy place and the peace is shared by you, ask God to help you retain the peace. If, however, you were unhappy due to the loss of peace, may God have mercy on you and fill your hearts with fervent desires to possess this invaluable gift, the highest earthly good. Beg the Child Jesus until he hears you and give you peace.

Another year has passed with its woes, joys and pains that surround our lives. With deep faith and living trust we have always seen in everything the loving hand of God, which guides and directs our fate. If we once again look back with grateful hearts, we must admit that it was full of blessings. We have experienced many a thing that will strengthen our Congregation in the future; thanks to our Constitutions we have opened the paths that, under the auspices and blessings of the Church, lead us toward common life and assure the magnificent growth of monastic virtues. May we endeavour to live them faithfully. For not only does our earthly life depend on them, but also the eternal happiness.

Let us entrust our future in our Father's hands and promise to him as well to devote our weaknesses to his service, striving to make the virtues we vowed bloom in our Congregation. Let us exercise the sincere love for God and neighbours, in peace and concord, in kind compassion for the poor and sick, in mutual patience, in bearing lovingly the spiritual and physical weaknesses in great perseverance according to Christ the Lord's words that only the violent shall possess the Kingdom of God. Let us avoid the friendship of this world, let us exercise silence, especially during the conversations and unjust judgments about others. Let us beg to be the true beloveds of our heavenly Beloved and to participate in the eternal feast.

Our duty is to faithfully and duly fulfil the tasks because of the love for God. I am asking you to lovingly and patiently care for the sick and not to pay attention to the things that are not your duties. The world is indeed in a bad place, and its spiritual and material poverty is so great that we, who voluntarily chose the vocation that makes us commune with him, are compelled to show that we would like to do good to all and to love all in God; and if there is nothing we can do, let us at least wish to pray for them. Each sister should pray for the Holy Father and the persecuted Church daily at the Holy Mass.

If sisters should jointly attempt to fulfil my wishes and requests, God will bless their work; and when he summons them – and for some it might happen sooner than we think or expect – then with great trust in God’s mercy we might enter eternity. Pray, please, so that I may fulfil my duties faithfully too and by this I shall save my soul. May I be able to tell God one day, “O Lord, these are all I have been entrusted with; I have lost none.” May God protect us all and help us in various circumstances of our earthly lives. May we be supported by God’s blessing!¹

RESPONSORY Matthew 25:34-26; 40

Come, you who are blessed by my Father.

– I was hungry and you gave me food, I was naked and you clothed me, I was ill and you visited me.

Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.

– I was hungry and you gave me food, I was naked and you clothed me, I was ill and you visited me.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O Almighty and merciful God,
you gave to Blessed Mary Louise, virgin, the grace of imitating Christ in serving the poor and sick,
grant us, we beg you, that through her example and intercession we may faithfully fulfil the will of the heavenly Father and, willingly performing works of mercy, may deserve to be accepted as blessed in your Kingdom.
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.

Congregatio de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum. Probatum seu confirmatum, die 23 iulii 2007, Prot. 320/07/L.

¹ Translated by DChojnacki (2014).