

Saintly
Women
OF MODERN TIMES

“We need to cultivate, think upon, and seek
the companionship of those saints who,
though living on earth like ourselves, have
accomplished such great deeds for God.”

ST. TERESA OF ÁVILA



Saintly
Women
OF MODERN TIMES

Joan Carroll Cruz

TAN Books
Charlotte, North Carolina

Copyright © 2004 by Joan Carroll Cruz

TAN edition copyright © 2016 TAN Books.

The TAN edition has been re-typeset, with revisions, using the edition first published in 1984 by *Our Sunday Visitor*, Huntington, Indiana. Revisions include updating of punctuation, and spelling, along with the correction of occasional errors in typography, spelling, grammar, syntax, diction, and factual information.

All rights reserved. With the exception of short excerpts used in articles and critical review, no part of this work may be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in any form whatsoever, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

ISBN: 978-0-89555-861-9

Interior photos used with permission.

Printed and bound in the United States of America

TAN Books
Charlotte, North Carolina
www.TANBooks.com
2016

Table of Contents



<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>Foreword</i>	xiii
Adele Bonolis, Servant of God	1
Amata Cerretelli	5
Angela (Aniela) Salawa, Blessed	12
Anita Cantieri, Venerable	15
Anna Maria Inguscio, Servant of God	27
Armida Barelli, Servant of God	30
Benedetta Bianchi, Venerable	33
Carla Ronci, Venerable	39
Carolina Bellandi Palladini, Servant of God	45
Catherine de Hueck Doherty	49
Cleonilde Guerra, Servant of God	53
Concepta Bertoli, Servant of God	55
Dorothy Day, Servant of God	58
Edel Quinn, Venerable	67
Elisabeth Leseur, Servant of God	74
Elisabetta Tasca Serena, Venerable	82
Eurosia Fabris Barban, Blessed	90
Fiorella Bianchi, Servant of God	93
Genoveffa De Troia, Venerable	94
Gianna Beretta Molla, Saint	96
Hildegard Burjan, Blessed	108
Josefa Naval Girbes, Blessed	111
Madeleine Delbr�el, Servant of God	113
Maria Aristeo Ceccarelli, Servant of God	116
Maria Carolina Scampone, Servant of God	123
Maria Chiara Magro, Venerable	130
Maria Corsini Quattrocchi, Blessed	131
Maria de la Luz Camacho, Servant of God	136
Maria Gioia, Venerable	141

Maria Marchetta, Servant of God	143
Marianna Biernacka, Blessed	146
Marica Stankovik	149
Martyred Women of the Spanish Persecution	152
Amalia Abad Casasempere, Blessed	
Ana Maria Aranda Riera, Blessed	
Carmen Garcia Moyon, Blessed	
Consuelo Mella, Blessed	
Crescencia Vails Espi, Blessed	
Dolores Mella, Blessed	
Florence Caerols Martinez, Blessed	
Francisca Cuallado Baixauli, Blessed	
Herminia Martinez Amigo, Blessed	
Incarnation Gil Valls, Blessed	
Josefina Moscardo Montalva, Blessed	
Luisa Maria Frias Canizares, Blessed	
Maria del Olvida Noguera Albelda, Blessed	
Maria Climent Mateu, Blessed	
Maria Teresa Ferragud Roig, Blessed	
Maria Jorda Botella, Blessed	
Maria Luisa Montesinos Orduna, Blessed	
Maria of the Purification Vidal Shepherd, Blessed	
Maria del Carmen Viel Ferrando, Blessed	
Pilar Villalonga Villalba, Blessed	
Sofia Ximenez Ximenez, Blessed	
Tarsila Cordova Belda, Blessed	
Matilde Salem, Servant of God	157
Natalia Tulasiewicz, Blessed	159
Pauline Archer Vanier	161
Pauline Marie Jaricot, Venerable	167
Pierina Morosini, Blessed	175
Praxedes Fernandez, Servant of God	180
Rachel (Lina) Noceti, Servant of God	191
Rosa Giovannetti, Servant of God	193
Rose Prince	195
Santa Scorese, Servant of God	200
Santina Campana, Servant of God	204
Satoko Kitahara, Servant of God	207
Simona Tronci, Servant of God	215

Teresa Bracco, Blessed	220
Teresa Di Janni, Servant of God	223
Teresa Ferdinandi, Servant of God	225
Victoria Diez Bustos de Molina, Blessed	227
Victorina Rivara-Perazzo, Servant of God	232
Virginia Blanco, Servant of God	235
Wiera (Ida) Francia	239
Wilhelmina Ronconi	245
<i>Index of the Women's Occupations and Difficulties of Life and Health</i>	251
<i>Bibliography</i>	257
<i>Index of the Women</i>	261

Acknowledgments



*H*ow can one adequately show appreciation for the kindness and generosity of so many who answered my queries about the holy people mentioned in the present volume? The interest in these works by so many is truly a humbling experience. Those who answered my queries and sent books, booklets pamphlets, pictures, and various documents include archbishops, bishops, postulators and vice postulators, numerous organizations, relatives of the subjects mentioned, and various individuals. Had it not been for the help of these good people, it would have been impossible to portray adequately these saintly individuals, since many of these 20th-century people are not well-known, having only lately been designated as Servants of God.

Since one or two names inadvertently might be missed, were I to list the names of all who helped me, I am asking their forgiveness in not mentioning them by name. I am, however, deeply grateful for their gracious assistance, which has been an inspiration to me. I extend to all of them my deepest appreciation and respect. I pray that the good Lord will abundantly bless their kindness, and that the saintly people mentioned in the three volumes will look kindly upon them. To all I extend my profound respect and deepest appreciation.

Foreword



The Catholic Church has been graced with a bountiful array of saints, but, as we know, the greater majority are nuns and priests. By comparison, we have only a small fraction of lay men and women who were declared by the Church as having merited the honors of the altar. Since we are encouraged to imitate the virtues of the saints, wouldn't it seem more appropriate if we had models of holiness who lived outside the cloister in the secular world—saints who endured the struggles and difficulties of everyday life as we encounter in secular surroundings? As St. Teresa of Ávila has written, “We need to cultivate and think upon, and seek the companionship of those saints who, though living on earth like ourselves, have accomplished such great deeds for God.”

In my book *Secular Saints*, examples were given of almost two hundred fifty lay men and women who, if not already canonized, were on their way to canonization. They came from the early days of the Church, through the ages, to the present day. In this volume, we have only twentieth-century saints, many of whom drove cars and used telephones. Some even had televisions as well as many other modern conveniences. All lived and died in the last century, with the exception of Pauline Jaricot.

It is hoped that the reader will examine the indexes that give the occupations and the difficulties of life and health that were encountered by these holy women. By making use of the indexes, readers can find a saint to whom they can relate—saints who had a similar occupation, or those who experienced the same difficulties or illnesses as readers might now be enduring.

We have here many biographies of laywomen representing many countries. They are from such diverse occupations as a rag collector, a hair dresser, and an embroidery teacher, among many other professions.

An explanation about the various titles follows.

The sole purpose in writing this book was to demonstrate, to people in every walk of life, the virtues practiced, and the cares and sufferings endured by laywomen who are now on their way to canonization. Those who have difficulties, and those who are suffering, have examples here of holy people who have had the same struggles and difficulties. It was because of these hardships, endured with prayer and confidence in God, that they attained holiness.

How did they do it? Here, then, are their secrets.

—JOAN CARROLL CRUZ

Servant of God: After five years have elapsed since death, and after the bishop of the diocese officially opens the cause of beatification, the candidate may be called a Servant of God.

Venerable: After the Congregation for the Causes of Saints receives the case, examines it and determines that it has merit, and after a number of preliminary steps have been taken, a *Decree super Virtutibus* is issued, which gives the Servant of God the title of Venerable.

Blessed: Once a miracle, worked through the intercession of the Venerable, has been canonically investigated and approved, this, together with the Decree of Heroic Virtues, is passed to the Holy Father, who decides on beatification. After the ceremony of beatification has been held, the Venerable is now given the title of Blessed.

Saint: For canonization, another miracle performed *after* the beatification ceremony is required. After the miracle has been canonically investigated and approved, the pope may perform a canonization ceremony, after which the Blessed is now given the title of Saint.

NOTE: Those without a title are holy persons whose cases are still on the diocesan level, but whose causes are expected to be officially opened in the near future.

Servant of God Adele Bonolis



1909–1980

Founder of Homes for Unfortunates

ITALY



*I*t was evident to those who knew Adele Bonolis that she was imbued with the love of God. This love enabled her to transmit serenity and peace to those who came into contact with her, especially to those she helped in the foundations she organized for the care and education of unfortunates.

She was born in Milan, Italy, to a hardworking family on August 14, 1909, one of six children. She was educated in Catholic schools and was active in the women's division of Catholic Action in the parish of St. Ambrogio. The aim of Catholic Action was to foster an intense spiritual life in its members, which in turn would inspire them to participate in charitable and apostolic work. Eventually, she assumed the responsibility for the group.

She never married, but was busy with the needs and lives of her siblings. According to Adele's good friend, Lina Saltafossi, when

Adele's mother became ill, Adele attended her and lovingly saw to her needs each day before Adele had to report for work. Staying close to her mother during that time, Adele began her ministry to the young by often instructing them from the front of her home. This continued until her mother's death in 1935.

Early in her life, Adele abandoned herself completely to the will of God and developed a rich interior life based on the Eucharist and daily sacrifices. Throughout her lifetime, she would suffer from pleurisy and other illnesses, but nothing, it is said, would prohibit her from her daily Mass, not even when she was feeling ill and had a high fever.

After receiving her commercial license, Adele worked for three successive firms. Later she enrolled in the Catholic University in Milan, from which she graduated with a degree in philosophy on November 24, 1944. These were war years with devastation and misery, which she experienced most severely when her home was totally destroyed in the bombardment.

We find her next in Sondrio and Lecco with another friend, Giuseppina Achilli. Instead of teaching philosophy, which was a more lucrative position, Adele abandoned this field in favor of directing and teaching religion to high school students. Many years later, her students remembered and admired her for the care she took in forming their consciences and instilling in them a love of their faith.

But Adele's time was not restricted to teaching. Her spare time was devoted to her activities with Catholic Action. Her talents and abilities were soon recognized when she was named to the diocesan council.

Adele was content with teaching and her work with Catholic Action. Yet she felt an overwhelming need not only to teach the young, but also to help the sick. For that reason she enrolled in the school of medicine in 1946.

However, she was not destined to graduate; God had other plans for her. Her need to help the poor and unfortunate was soon to be realized. The opportunity came in the form of a request from a judge of the court of Lecco.

He asked if she would help boys who had appeared in his court. So she directed a summer colony for them, which was so successful that she was asked to continue the experiment. Thus was founded the *Castel Vezio*, or the *Casa dei Ragazzi*, for the education and care of troublesome boys.

Together with two of her good friends and fellow workers in Catholic Action, Giovanna Negrini and Giuseppina Achilli, Adele founded the *Casa Maria Assunta*, or the House of Feminine Orientation. It opened to receive prostitutes, their children and those women being released from prisons. Here was a home for these women where they could physically and morally recover.

This was the beginning of a series of houses for the help and care of unfortunates. In 1962, Adele founded Villa Salus and the *As. Fra. Case Iris* for the mentally ill. Among the other institutions is the *Casa San Paolo*, founded in 1970, which was financially assisted by Cardinal Giovanni Montini, the future Pope Paul VI. This was established for those men discharged from jail and from the judicial insane asylums.

Another is the *Casa Maria Delle Grazie*, founded in 1972 for the education and rehabilitation of disadvantaged men and those suffering from psychiatric, physical, social, and economic problems, as well as those released from prisons. All of these substantial buildings are two to four stories high and are large, neat, and attractive. All are in active service today, staffed by qualified doctors, nurses, and social workers.

Based on what she called the “three pillars,” *previdenza*, *prudenza*, and *provvidenza* (foresight, prudence, and providence), she worked hard not only to establish these houses, but to find the means to support her guests, to provide them with all that was necessary for their care, and to provide qualified workers. This, of course, was a difficult task with many disappointments, but her inner strength and the “three pillars,” plus her love of God, sustained her.

Adele also founded an association now called the Foundation, which gathers people who desire to advance in the spiritual life. This, too, is active today.

With all her many activities and responsibilities, testimony reveals that “Adele consumed all of her existence doing good without a desire of reward or applause. . . . She gave her time and attention to the great and the humble, to the young and the elderly, listening to all with patience and love.”

Her work was soon to end. Around the year 1976, Adele experience the first symptoms of an intestinal tumor and underwent an operation at the *Clinic S. Giuseppe*. The condition did not improve, but continued to advance and cause discomfort for the next four years. During this prolonged illness, she and her sister-friend Giuseppina continued to visit the various institutions, encouraging the managers and workers, and offering consolation to the residents.

Adele died on August 11, 1980, in Milan, with a reputation of great holiness. During the funeral homily by Monsignor Libero Tresoldi in *S. Ambrogio* church, he declared that Adele “was a woman of faith who had surrendered herself to God, was docile to His wishes, and had a deep capacity for greatness.” She was buried in the Resurrection Cemetery of Lucinasco, Italy.

In her honor, a book was published in 1986, which included glowing testimonials attesting to her gift for charity, her love of the unfortunates, and her love of God.

Her cause for beatification has been opened, much to the satisfaction of those who knew her, and to those who were charitably helped in her many institutions. †