

BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Reparata

Life, prayer and novena

Feast day: October 8

Saintspedia · saintspedia.com

IN BRIEF

Saint Reparata

Virgin and martyr of Caesarea in Palestine in the third century, patron saint of Nice and co-patron of Florence.

Feast day	October 8
Born	c. 237, Caesarea in Palestine
Died	c. 250, Caesarea in Palestine
Era	3rd century
Patron saint of	Nice and the diocese of Nice, Florence (co-patron), Teano, Atri, Casoli, perseverance of young people in the faith

In this booklet

Life

Prayer to Saint Reparata, Patron Saint of Nice

Novena to Saint Reparata

Credits and sources

Booklet offered by Saintspedia, the directory of Catholic saints: lives of the saints, prayers, novenas and places of pilgrimage, at saintspedia.com. Texts written by Saintspedia, except traditional prayers marked as such. Original prayers and novenas are not official liturgical texts. Free booklet, to print and share for personal, family or parish use; please do not sell it.

LIFE

Saint Reparata

Saint Reparata was a young virgin martyr of Caesarea in Palestine who, according to tradition, died around 250 during the persecution of Emperor Decius, at the age of twelve to fifteen. A beautiful legend tells that her body, laid in a small boat, was guided by angels to the shore of Nice. Patron saint of Nice and its diocese and co-patron of Florence, she is celebrated on October 8.

Who was Saint Reparata?

Reparata, in Italian *Reparata* and in the dialect of Nice *Reparada*, is a figure both deeply loved and very little known. Her name means "renewed" or "restored" in Latin. We have no contemporary document about her: her story comes to us through a later *Passion*, built on the models of ancient martyrdom accounts. The Roman Martyrology commemorates her on October 8 as a virgin and martyr of Caesarea in Palestine.

Her cult spread very early in Italy, Provence and Corsica. In Florence, the first cathedral was dedicated to her, before the building of Santa Maria del Fiore. In Nice, she is the patron of the cathedral and of the whole city, and the people of Nice pray to her especially for the perseverance of young people in the faith.



Saint Reparata, virgin and martyr, in Italian painting.

Key dates in the life of Saint Reparata

- **c. 237-238**: Born at Caesarea in Palestine, according to tradition.
- **c. 250**: Persecution of Emperor Decius, who requires every inhabitant to offer sacrifice to the gods of the Empire.
- **c. 250**: She refuses to sacrifice, endures several tortures and is beheaded, aged twelve to fifteen.
- **Early Middle Ages**: Her cult spreads in Italy; in Florence, the old cathedral bears her name.
- **Middle Ages**: Her cult is attested in Nice, where a church is dedicated to her in the lower town.
- **1298**: According to Florentine tradition, the cathedral of Florence, under reconstruction, receives the title of Santa Maria del Fiore.
- **1650-1699**: The present Cathedral of Saint Reparata in Nice is built.

- **1689-1690**: Her relics are authenticated and placed in a reliquary in Nice Cathedral.

The martyrdom of a teenager

According to her *Passion*, Reparata was a young Christian of Caesarea, a great port city of Palestine and home to a lively and learned Church, where Origen was teaching at the same period. When the edict of Decius required everyone to prove their loyalty by sacrificing to the gods, she refused. Brought before the judge, she declared that his threats were useless, because she worshiped Jesus Christ.

The account then lists her tortures: pitch or molten lead poured over her, burning torches or blades applied to her breast, a blazing furnace. Each time she prayed, and the fire did her no harm. Her hair was cut off and she was exposed to public mockery. Finally she was beheaded. At the moment of her death, it is said, her soul rose to heaven in the form of a white dove.

These marvelous details should not be read as an official record. In their own way, they express the conviction of the first Christians: the martyr's strength does not come from himself or herself but from God, and death has no power over one who is united to Christ.

The boat and the Bay of Angels

The tradition of Nice adds a famous episode. The young martyr's body was laid in a boat and left to drift on the Mediterranean. Pushed by the wind and guided by angels, the boat reached the shore of Nice, where the inhabitants received it. According to a popular tradition, the Baie des Anges (Bay of Angels) owes its name to this episode, although other explanations exist.

This story echoes those of several saints of Provence who arrived by sea, such as Saint Devota in Monaco or Saint Tropez. It reflects a historical reality: the Gospel came from the East along sea routes, carried by merchants, soldiers and travelers.



The Cathedral of Saint Reparata, in Old Nice.

Why is Saint Reparata the patron saint of Nice and Florence?

In Nice, a church dedicated to Saint Reparata stood in the lower town in the Middle Ages. It became the cathedral and was replaced in the seventeenth century by the present Baroque building, in the heart of Old Nice. A chapel there is dedicated to the saint: it holds a glass reliquary with her relics, authenticated in 1689, and three paintings of her martyrdom. The people of Nice celebrate her every October 8.

In Florence, the old cathedral of Santa Reparata preceded Santa Maria del Fiore; its remains have been excavated beneath the Duomo and can be visited today. Reparata remains co-patron of the city, with Saint John the Baptist.

She is also honored at Teano, Atri and Casoli in Italy, in several villages of Corsica such as Santa-Reparata-di-Balagna, and at Le Puy-Sainte-Réparade in Provence. Relics have been kept at Flamanville, in Normandy, since the nineteenth century.

Because she bore witness to Christ while barely out of childhood, she is invoked above all for the perseverance of young people in the faith.

Symbols and how to recognize Saint Reparata in art

She is shown as a young girl, often crowned, with the palm of martyrdom, a book, and the dove that recalls her soul rising to heaven. In Florentine painting, she frequently carries a white banner with a red cross, the banner of the resurrection.

What can we learn from Saint Reparata?

Reparata was a teenager who said no to idolatry and yes to Christ, at an age when one is still searching. She is a reminder that holiness does not wait for age. We can entrust to her young people, middle and high school students, those who must live their faith in a hostile setting, and the city of Nice.



The chapel of Saint Reparata, Nice Cathedral.

Where to pray to Saint Reparata

- **Nice** (Alpes-Maritimes, France): the Cathedral of Saint Reparata, on Place Rossetti, and its relic chapel.
- **Florence** (Italy): the remains of the old cathedral of Santa Reparata, beneath Santa Maria del Fiore.
- **Santa-Reparata-di-Balagna** (Corsica): the Romanesque church dedicated to her.
- **Le Puy-Sainte-Réparade** (Bouches-du-Rhône): the town that bears her name.
- **Flamanville** (Manche, Normandy): the church of Saint-Germain, which keeps relics.

To pray with her, see the prayer to Saint Reparata and the novena to Saint Reparata, from September 30 to October 8.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Reparata, Patron Saint of Nice

Saint Reparata, the young martyr of Caesarea and patron saint of Nice, has been invoked by the people of Nice for centuries. In the chapel of the cathedral dedicated to her, a notice recalls that she is prayed to "for the perseverance of young people in the faith". Here is a prayer used in the diocese of Nice, followed by an original prayer for young people.

Prayer to Saint Reparata, Protector of Nice

This prayer, addressed to the saint as "protector of our city and our diocese", is used in Nice. Here it is in an English rendering:

> *O Saint Reparata, protector of our city and our diocese! The Lord gave you the strength and courage to bear witness to the Gospel even to death. Your faithfulness is a model for us. Your prayer comes to our help and your triumph revives our hope. We entrust to you our young people, and especially... Obtain for them that, upheld by the strength of the Holy Spirit, they may, like you, bear witness throughout their lives to faith in Christ, and one day receive the crown of glory in the Kingdom of God.*

Source: prayer to Saint Reparata used in the diocese of Nice, translated from the French. At the ellipsis, name the young people you wish to entrust to her.

Prayer for young people

> *Saint Reparata, you were barely more than a child when you bore witness to Christ. Look upon the young people of today. You know their enthusiasm, their doubts and their fears. When their faith is mocked, give them your quiet courage. When they are tempted to follow the crowd, remind them that God loves them just as they are.*
>
> *You passed through fire without being burned: keep them safe in their trials. Your soul flew to heaven like a dove: teach them the freedom of the children of God. Watch over Nice, over its families and over those who arrive by sea. Amen.*

This prayer is an original text by Saintspedia, free to use for personal and community prayer.

Intentions to entrust to Saint Reparata

- The perseverance of young people in the faith, especially those preparing for Confirmation and students.
- Persecuted Christians, particularly in the Holy Land and the Middle East, her homeland.
- The city and diocese of Nice, sailors and those who travel by sea.
- Families going through hard times.

When to pray this prayer

Her feast day is October 8. You can pray to her at the start of a school year, before a Confirmation, or whenever a young person you love struggles with faith. To prepare for her feast, follow the novena to Saint Reparata, from September 30 to October 8, and read the life of Saint Reparata.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Reparata

This novena is an original composition by Saintspedia, inspired by the life and legend of Saint Reparata, virgin and martyr, patron saint of Nice. It is not an official liturgical text. To end on her feast day, October 8, begin it on September 30. You can pray it alone, with your family or with a youth group, and at any time of the year for a young person you love.

How to pray this novena

Each day, entrust your intention to God, read the short meditation, say the prayer of the day, then an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be. The small act suggested helps you live the day with Saint Reparata. If you miss a day, simply continue the next, without discouragement.

Her story reaches us through a later *Passion* and the legends of Nice, which mix history and wonder. These meditations draw on the lessons of faith they carry, without claiming that every detail is historical.



The martyrdom of Saint Reparata, painting in Nice Cathedral.

Day 1: A child of Caesarea

Reparata grew up in a lively Church at Caesarea, where Scripture was studied and the faith was taught. Faith is received from a community and a family before it becomes our own. Origen was teaching in that same city, and Christians there loved the Word of God.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for those who handed on the faith to me; help me to hand it on in my turn. Saint Reparata, pray for me. Amen.

Today: Pray for the person who first helped you know God.

Day 2: Saying no to idols

Reparata refused to sacrifice to the gods of the Empire. Today's idols go by other names: money, appearance, power, the approval of others. Saying no to them is not a loss: it frees the heart for the one God who loves us.

Prayer: Lord, free my heart from everything that takes your place. Saint Reparata, pray for me. Amen.

Today: Name one idol in your life and take a concrete step away from it.

Day 3: The courage to speak

Before the judge, the young girl simply declared that she worshiped Jesus Christ. She sought neither to provoke nor to hide. Her calm answer shows that witness is first a matter of truth and peace, not of argument.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, give me the words to bear witness to my faith with simplicity. Saint Reparata, pray for me. Amen.

Today: If the occasion arises, do not hide that you are a Christian.

Day 4: Passing through fire

The legend says that the fire did not burn her. God does not always spare us from trials, but he goes through them with us. Many people today pass through the fire of illness, grief or loneliness, and discover there that they are not alone.

Prayer: Lord, in my trials keep me trusting and united to you. Saint Reparata, pray for me. Amen.

Today: Write down a trial you are going through and entrust it to God.

Day 5: Enduring mockery

Her hair was cut off and she was exposed to the jeers of the crowd. Mockery wounds, but it cannot touch the dignity that God gives.

Prayer: Lord, protect those who are humiliated and mocked because of their faith or their weakness. Saint Reparata, pray for them. Amen.

Today: Stand up for someone who is being made fun of.

Day 6: Youth given to God

Reparata was between twelve and fifteen years old. God also calls the young to great things, and their generosity can teach adults.

Prayer: Saint Reparata, watch over the young people of my family and parish; obtain for them perseverance in the faith. Amen.

Today: Encourage a young person in their life of faith or in their studies.

Day 7: The dove

At her death, it is said, her soul flew away like a dove. The dove is also the sign of the Holy Spirit and of peace.

Prayer: Come, Holy Spirit, and give me your peace in the midst of my restlessness. Saint Reparata, pray for me. Amen.

Today: Take a step toward reconciliation with someone.

Day 8: The boat guided by angels

According to the legend of Nice, her boat was guided by angels to the shore. God does not abandon those who are adrift. Nice, a city turned toward the sea, still welcomes travelers and newcomers.

Prayer: Lord, guide those who are lost, migrants at sea and all who no longer know where to go. Saint Reparata, pray for them. Amen.

Today: Pray for people crossing the Mediterranean, or support an organization that welcomes them.

Day 9: The crown of glory

Reparata received the crown promised to those who remain faithful. Every Christian life is called to share in this victory.

Prayer: Lord, at the end of this novena, I entrust my intention to you. Through the intercession of Saint Reparata, keep me faithful to the end, and lead me one day into your Kingdom. Amen.

Today: Attend Mass if you can, or light a candle before an image of the saint.

Closing prayer

On the last day, end the novena with this prayer:

> *Saint Reparata, virgin and martyr, patron saint of Nice, I place in your hands the intention of these nine days. Obtain for me the courage of faith, purity of heart and perseverance. Pray for young people, for persecuted Christians and for all who are adrift. Amen.*

To go further: the life of Saint Reparata and the prayer to Saint Reparata.

CREDITS

Credits and sources

Texts: Saintspedia (saintspedia.com). The sources cited in each part are those of the corresponding page of the website. Biographical data partly from Wikidata (CC0). Font: EB Garamond (SIL Open Font License).

Images

- Cover: Sailko, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Source · License
- Saint Reparata, virgin and martyr, in Italian painting.: Image: Bernardo Daddi, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons. Source · License
- The Cathedral of Saint Reparata, in Old Nice.: Image: Zairon, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Source · License
- The chapel of Saint Reparata, Nice Cathedral.: Image: MIB-AJ, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Source · License
- The martyrdom of Saint Reparata, painting in Nice Cathedral.: Image: MIB-AJ, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Source · License



More free booklets

Lives of the saints, prayers, novenas and places of pilgrimage: find all the booklets to print at

saintspedia.com