

Blessed Imelda Lambertini

Patroness of First Communicants

Little Imelda Lambertini loved Jesus so deeply that she **often wondered, “Can anyone receive Jesus into their heart and not die?”** This caused her to request, when she was just five years old, to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. However, as it was the year 1327, her request was out of the question. At that time children were not allowed to receive their First Holy Communion until they were at least 12 years old. But Imelda persisted.

At the age of nine, Imelda was allowed to enter the Dominican convent as a young postulant. All the while she continued to beg to be allowed to receive the Holy Eucharist.

One night, on the Vigil of the Ascension, the now eleven-year-old Imelda stayed late in the chapel to pray after Mass. She had begged to be allowed to make her First Holy Communion on this feast, but was again denied. Each denied request increased her love and desire for the Real Presence of Jesus in her soul. Some say that a scent of roses drew the nuns back to the chapel, other accounts cite a bright light. However it happened, the returning nuns were greeted by a stunning sight.

As Imelda prayed, a consecrated host was seen suspended in the air above her head. Quickly understanding God’s will for the child to receive, the convent chaplain took the Eucharist and gave Imelda her First Holy Communion on the spot.

As she took Jesus into her heart, Imelda entered into a state of ecstatic prayer. The child remained kneeling as the nuns left chapel to allow her more time to pray. When they returned for her, they found her just as they had left her, but her body was lifeless. **After receiving Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Imelda, proving her early words to be prophetic, died of pure love and joy.**

