Zita

Born: c1212

Died: 1272

Feast Day:

27 April

DERRY DIOCESAN CATECHETICAL CENTRE

Zita was born in Tuscany in a village not far from Lucca, to Giovanni and Buonissima Lombardo. Her elder sister became a Cistercian nun.

At the age of 12, she became a servant in the household of the Fatinellis, a well-to-do family of silk merchants. Zita was allowed to attend school for a year. She was then trained under an older maid. Zita served the same family for almost fifty years. She was known for her sunny personality, work ethic, and for giving leftover bread to the poor.

Through her diligence and fidelity, she became a trusted and valued servant. She spent her days in doing ordinary things extraordinarily well. She always rose several hours before the rest of the family and took care to attend Mass every morning before she began work. Zita was known for her kindness and generosity to the poor. She gave one-third of her wages to her parents, kept a third, and gave the rest to the poor.

Zita was placed in charge of the household almsgiving. She was allowed to visit the sick and poor in their own homes and tend to their needs. She would go out in the evenings and invite some poor homeless woman to supper. She offered her room as a safe shelter for the night.

Zita's body was exhumed in 1580. It was discovered to be incorrupt. Her body is on display for public veneration in the Basilica di San Frediano in Lucca. She is patron saint of domestic servants, homemakers, lost keys, people ridiculed for their piety, single laywomen, waiters, waitresses, Italian City of Lucca

Every year on April 27, citizens of Lucca bake bread and bring flowers (often daffodils) to San Frediano in celebration of her feast day,