

January 29

Saint PAOLA, EUSTOCHIO and MELANIA

RELIGIOUS

Optional memorial

Saint Paula Roman (347-404) was a noble of Rome. Married at 15, she had five children, including a daughter, Eustochio. Widowed at 31, she followed the ascetic ideal of noble Marcella and turned her own house into a cenacle. She was a disciple of St. Jerome, who taught her Hebrew, and she distinguished herself by her knowledge of the Bible. Along with her daughter Eustochio, she followed St. Jerome, as he moved to Palestine (in 385), and went to Bethlehem, where she led a very austere monastic life, spending her time in prayer, work and study. Her wisdom and gentleness attracted many women to Christ, from all backgrounds, and her monastery had great spiritual influence. She died on the 26 of January 404, at the age of 56, and was buried at the cave of the Nativity.

Saint Eustochio devoted herself to God very young and became a spiritual daughter to St. Jerome, who addressed a letter to her, referred to as 22a, and entitled "custody of virginity". Her too, knew Hebrew, and became of precious help to her teacher, who dedicated to her his "Commentaries on Isaiah and Ezekiel". After the death of her Mother, she lead the monastery and took care of little Paula, the daughter of her brother Tossozio and his wife Leta. She died some year between 413 to 419, away from the convent which had been ruined by the Pelagians.

St. Melania the Younger, born from a noble roman family in 333, following the example of St. Melania the Elder, had wanted to embrace the ascetic life, but was forced by her parents to get marry at age 14. Having lost both of her sons, Melania persuaded her husband to live in perpetual continence. They stayed in Africa and finally settled in Jerusalem in 417. After the death of her husband, she built a monastery on Mount of Olives. She died in 439.

These three women throughout their lives aspired to "the knowledge of Christ's love", as referred to in St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians., to this knowledge Christ which is the science of the saints.

Entrance Antiphon                      Ps 73: 28

For me, to be near God is my good; to make the Lord God my refuge. I shall declare all your works in the gates of Gerusalem.

COLLECT

O God, who lovingly rise the humble, you wanted that the saints Paola, Eustochius and Melania testify to charity and outstanding patience; allow that, through their merits and intercession, we may enduringly bear our cross and that we love you evermore.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ

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In Bethleem: memorial

COLLECT

O God, you lovingly drew Saints Paola and Eustochius to the Crib of your son, taking them away from the pomp of the world. May we also, through their intercession, despising the vanities of this world, because authentic disciples of Christ. This we ask through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ...

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First Reading

A reading from the letter of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians 3: 14-19

I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 34: 2-3.4-5.6-7.8-9.10-11 (R. 9a)

R. Taste and see that the LORD is good.

1. I will bless the LORD at all times;  
praise of him is always in my mouth.  
In the LORD my soul shall make its boast;  
the humble shall hear and be glad.

2. Glorify the LORD with me;  
together let us praise his name.  
I sought the LORD, and he answered me;  
from all my terrors he set me free.

3. Look toward him and be radiant;  
let your faces not be abashed.  
This lowly one called; the LORD heard,  
and rescued him from all his distress.

3. The angel of the LORD is encamped  
around those who fear him, to rescue them.  
Taste and see that the LORD is good.  
Blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.

4. Fear the LORD, you his holy ones.  
They lack nothing, those who fear him.  
The rich suffer want and go hungry,  
but those who seek the LORD lack no blessing.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Jn 15: 9b, 5b

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Remain in my love. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit.

R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke 10: 38-42

As they continued their journey he entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary (who) sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. Martha,

burdened with much serving, came to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me."

The Lord said to her in reply, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her."

The gospel of the Lord.

#### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Grant O Lord, that through the celebration of these holy mysteries we may seek always your kingdom and its justice, through which Saints Paola, Eustochius and Melania scorned deceptive riches and the fleeting pleasure of the world.

This we ask through Christ our Lord.

#### PREFACE

Holy, holy, holy...

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON            Ps 61: 5-6

Then will I dwell in your tent forever,  
and hide in the shelter of your wings.  
For you, O God, have heard my vows.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Infuse in us, O Father, through the strength of this sacrament, the ineffable sweetness of your love, so that, having overcome the obstacles of the world, we may adhere to you, the sole and highest good.

This we ask through Christ our Lord.