



### **Also known as**

- female John Bosco
- Daughter of Mary Help of Christians
- Social Apostle of Costa Rica

### **Memorial**

- 7 July

### **Profile**

- One of eight children born to a wealthy, upper-class family; her father was a government minister. Educated by her family, tutors and at the local Salesian Sisters' school, she could play piano and violin, studied drawing, and loved to learn. At the age of twelve she spent a year extremely sick from rheumatic fever; she was paralyzed for six months and her heart was permanently damaged. She was cured by the intercession and apparition of Our Lady, Help of Christians, during which vision she understood her vocation to be a Salesian sister.

- On 8 December 1915, Maria joined the Marian Association's Daughters of Mary. She joined the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians in 1920, and on 6 January 1929 in Nicaragua, Maria made her final profession as a Salesian. Transferred to San Jose, Costa Rica in 1931. Taught music, drawing and typing to rich school girls, trained catechists and trades to the poor. Many of her students were won over to her way of life, and worked with her to help the poor and abandoned.

- Maria developed a ministry of fund raising and of showing the wealthy practical ways to bring their charity to the poor. She began to set up recreational centers in 1945, and food distribution centers in 1953. She opened a school for poor girls in 1961, and 1966 a clinic staffed by volunteer doctors. In 1973 she organized the construction of seven homes, which became the foundation of the village of Centro San Jose, a community where poor families could have decent homes. An excellent teacher, manager and fund-raiser, she was known for her way of bringing God to people one on one, bringing love and devotion to the Eucharist to social improvements.

### **Born**

- 13 January 1902 at Granada, Nicaragua

### **Died**

- 7 July 1977 in Las Peñitas, León, Nicaragua of a heart attack
- Salesian chapel, San José, Costa Rica

### **Venerated**

- 18 December 2000 by Pope John Paul II (decree of heroic virtues)

### **Beatified**

- 14 April 2002 by Pope John Paul II