



### **Also known as**

- Margherita
- Marina
- Margaritha
- Marine
- Margaretha

### **Memorial**

- 20 July
- 13 July in the Eastern Church

### **Profile**

Virgin and martyr whose story is known to us from a collection of legends, but no contemporary history. Her father was a pagan priest in Pisidian Antioch, Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Her mother died when Margaret was an infant, and the girl was raised by a Christian woman. Margaret's father disowned her, her nurse adopted her, and Margaret converted, consecrating herself and her virginity to God.

One day a Roman prefect saw the beautiful young Margaret as she was tending sheep, and tried to get her into his bed. When she refused, the official denounced her as an outlaw Christian, and she was brought to trial. When she refused to sacrifice to the pagan gods, the authorities tried to burn her, then boil her in a large cauldron; each time her prayers kept her unharmed. She was finally martyred by beheading.

Part of her story involves her meeting the devil in the form of a dragon, being swallowed by the dragon, and then escaping safely when the cross she carried irritated the dragon's innards; this accounts for this virgin's association with pregnancy, labour, and childbirth. She was one of the saints who appeared to Saint Joan of Arc. One of the Fourteen Holy Helpers.

### **Born**

- Antioch

### **Died**

- beheaded, date unknown
- relics claimed by several locations

### **Canonized**

- Pre-Congregation

### **Patronage**

- against kidney disease
- against loss of milk by nursing mothers
- against sterility
- childbirth
- dying people