

## May 31 2020-Pentecost Sunday

### St. Petronilla

Petronilla is the only apostle's child who is recognized by the Church as a saint.

Believed to be the daughter of St. Peter, little is known about her. Early writers say that she devoted her life to taking care of her father. Peter supposedly cured her of palsy, and when her beauty interfered with her spiritual life, Peter prayed that she be afflicted with a fever until her faith strengthened. Scholars disagree as to whether she died as a martyr.

Pope Siricius (384-399) built a basilica over her tomb, and in the eighth century her relics were removed from the Catacombs of Domitilla, and buried near St. Peter's Basilica in a Roman-era mausoleum that became known as the Church of St. Petronilla. That church was demolished when St. Peter's was rebuilt in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Her relics were eventually placed under the altar dedicated to her in the new basilica.

St. Petronilla is the patron saint of mountain travelers. Her feast is May 31.

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The altar of St. Petronilla can be found inside St. Peter's Basilica. Charlemagne and the other Roman emperors considered themselves adopted sons of Peter, so Petronilla was, to them, their sister. Their devotion to her was embraced by the French people, who still gather at St. Petronilla's altar on May 31 to venerate her.

### Pentecost

I've been baptized and, like the disciples on that first Pentecost, I've been immersed in the Spirit.

I've been called to carry out in my life the Lord's work. It's a mission specific to me because, since the beginning of time, there has been no one exactly like me. And until the end of time, there will be no one exactly like me.

Now I could say, "Okay, I've been called by God to be a Christian...I've been baptized, and I'm a member of the Church, and I've got to try my best to be a faithful member of the Church. So I go to Mass each Sunday. I turn in my envelope. I observe Lent and don't eat meat on Fridays.

But that's too generic.

It's sort of a "beige Christianity"—bland, flat, ordinary, uninteresting, standard, predictable stuff. That wasn't the color of the response of the apostles or any of the other holy people whom I've read about this Easter season. Their response, their discipleship was in bright colors...very personal, striking.

I need to take my response to God's call to the next level, down deep inside of me where my truest self lives.

**'The risen Christ said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.'" -Mark 16:5**