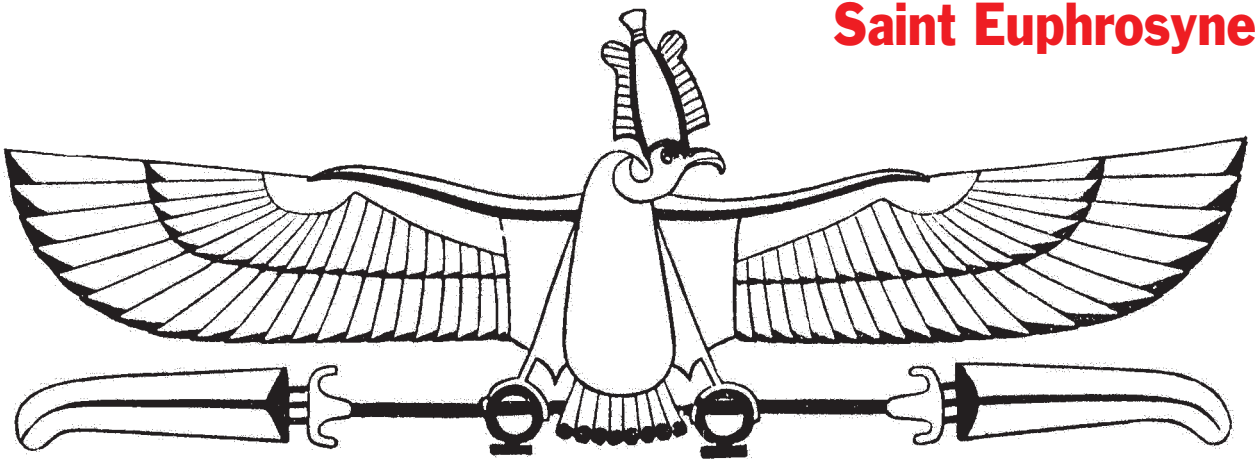


Saint Euphrosyne



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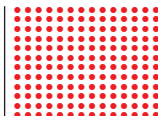
A rich man in Alexandria named, Paphnutius, was burdened with the sorrow of not having any children. The man was young, noble, virtuous and married but he and his wife were not conceiving children. Because he desperately wanted an heir to pass down

his name and riches to, he didn't cease to please the Heaven by serving the poor, going to church, fasting and praying.

The man visited an abbot at a monastery he donated often to. He told the abbot about his

efforts and the abbot asked for all the brothers in the monastery to join in prayer and fasting for the man to be blessed with a child. After their labors, Paphnutius was blessed with a beautiful little girl he named Euphrosyne (which means joy or happiness in Greek). The young girl was baptized at age seven, five years later, at age twelve she lost her mother to a cruel sickness. At the death of her mother, Paphnutius devoted himself entirely to the education of his child.





Quickly, everyone in the town became amazed by Euphrosyne because of her beauty and knowledge. However, despite her exceptional features, she maintained her humility. Euphrosyne would secretly fast and wear coarse clothes under her silk garments.

Shortly after turning eighteen, her father arranged a betrothal to a young, rich man in society who was well considered. Not long after her engagement, Euphrosyne visited a monastery with her father where she was enthralled by the hymns, isolation, fasting, and prayers -every aspect of monastic life.

Upon returning to her home, Paphnutius was invited to a dinner in another town. His invitation came personally from a monk who lived in the monastery Euphrosyne had recently visited. She took the opportunity to question the father about the number of brothers in the community, and other points of the life style there. He left without suspicion of the girl. When her father left for the dinner, Euphrosyne sent her servant to the monastery to bring her a father to speak with. She told the father that she wanted to be all to God, and wanted to be consecrated. During her days however, females weren't allowed to decide their own paths, and her father had decided for her to be betrothed. Even so, the monk consecrated her, prayed with her, and dressed her in monastic garment.

St. Euphrosyne cut her hair and left secretly to the monastery. She chose the monastery instead of a convent so that her father when he returned wouldn't be able to find her. When she reached the monastery, she asked to be alone as a hermit but the abbot told her she should join an older, religious monk to begin her new life, and change her name to Smaragde.

When her father came home he was filled with sorrow when his searches and inquires came back with no trace of St. Euphrosyne. He visited the monastery several times to assist in easing his loss and pain. On one visit, the father suggested he meet a very holy monk by the name of Smaragde. Paphnutius enjoyed his time with Smaragde and never realized it was his daughter because her face had changed due to her life style and fasting. Smaragde promised Paphnutius that his grief was wasted and he would see his daughter before her death.

The news gladdened Paphnutius and he waited thirty-eight years before returning. When he did, Smaragde was very sick with stomach bleeding. She told him to stay with her for three days. On the third night, she revealed her identity to her father and made him promise not to tell anyone her secret. Paphnutius sobbed with joy and pride for his brave daughter. After her death, he could not help but tell the others her story of bravery and strength as she posed as a monk while being so weak and delicate. At her funeral to honor her sanctity, an old, blind monk was lead to her coffin and kissed the corpse and instantly regained his eyesight.

Paphnutius went back to Alexandria, sold all of his riches and spent the rest of his life at the monastery, in the cell his daughter had consecrated, lived for ten years then was buried next to St. Euphrosyne-Smaragde

