

Blessed Michaelina of Pesaro
(Michelina Metelli)
Born 1300, Pesaro, Urbino, Italy
Died 19 June 1356, Pesaro, Urbino, Italy

The women of Pesaro are famous for their beauty and Michelina was no exception. She married a duke of Rimini, and by the age of twenty she was a rich widow, devoted to her only son.

Michelina sheltered a pious pilgrim called Syriana but scolded her for fasting, even on feast days. Syriana replied, *"Oh Michelina! If you could only taste the gifts of God, the things of the world would be bitter to you."* Michelina showed Syriana her jewels, saying, *"Paradise lies in these things."* Syriana wore her down, however, and Michelina admitted that only the love of her son kept her from renouncing the world. Syriana suggested that they pray to God to decide the boy's fate. They went to church together and prayed until Michelina heard a voice saying, *"Your son will be with Me in paradise, and thus I set you free from the love of him. Go in peace."*

Michela raced home, arriving in time to see two angels carrying her son's soul to heaven. From that day on, she turned her palace into a hospital where she welcomed anyone in need. Her in-laws did not enjoy watching Michelina spend their inheritance and had her confined to a tower. The guards could not bear to keep such a beautiful young woman in chains and let her go, blaming her escape on an angel. After that, the family left Michelina alone. Syriana disappears from Michelina's story after her conversion, and some believe that she was an angel in disguise. Michelina is commemorated in Pesaro on 20 June.

The Genius of Michelina:

In her terrible suffering, Michelina found grace and tasted the gifts of God.

Reflection:

"That I might not become too elated, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, an angel of Satan, to beat me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I begged the LORD about this, that it might leave me, but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell within me."

2 Corinthians 12.7-9

From Gallick, Sarah, The Big Book of Women Saints, p. 187