

1 W:ll Anne
(celebrate 1')

A couple of years ago (it was during the United Nations' Women's Year), I remember giving part of this programme, over a number of weeks, to short biographies of some women saints. Two who were not included in that series happen to be celebrated today in the church's calendar. And as November is a kind of Christian family month (beginning as it does with All Saints Day and the commemoration of all those who have died), maybe it's timely again to remember (or learn) something of the great and strong Christians of the past whose faith we share today, and whose intercession we can call on as they give an inspiration or a headline to us in how to live Christian lives. The saint of today that I particularly wanted to mention is St Margaret of Scotland, perhaps especially because she's one of those rather rare saints, a married woman. Though probably if she hadn't been a Queen as well, she'd be simply one of those millions of everyday, anonymous saints who were and are married women. And this too, perhaps, is an invitation today to reflect and pray for and about Christian married life. There's so much pressure and attack these days on family and marriage, that makes Christian family life and holiness more difficult; in our prayers today let us, with St Margaret, thank God for the life and love and the beginnings of our faith in Christ that we (most of us, I suppose) have received from our own parents: for the joys and graces of your own marriage, and the families of friends: to ask for, and receive, a deeper understanding, a greater love and commitment to Christ, the strength and power of the Holy Spirit to make us families where Christ is present, the family of God in the world. || Margaret of Scotland was born in Hungary, about the year 1046 while her father was in exile (Elizabeth's country)

Here. Her mother was German. Brought back to England in 1057, she found refuge in Scotland after the Norman conquest, and in 1070 married King Malcolm III. They had 6 sons and 2 daughters, and it seems Margaret exercised a good influence over her husband. She had always been deeply religious, and brought up her children admirably. She was particularly noted for her solicitude for orphans and poor people. Through her position, she also took an active part in church affairs, and in introducing Anglo-Norman customs and institutions into Scotland. Margaret died just 4 days after her husband had been assassinated, and was buried at Dunfermline abbey which she and her husband had founded in 1072. Her son David became one of the best of Scottish kings and was also revered as a saint by his people. 'Almighty God, you made St Margaret of Scotland outstanding for her great love of the poor. Following her example and helped by her prayers may we, by our lives, bear witness among men and women today to your goodness and love. Amen'. And now some music, an appropriate hymn to Mary, Mother of all Christians, Hail Holy Queen, 'Salve Regina': the music is by Poulenc

Friend Christ Mary
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MUSIC

PRAYERS

EDITED
To conclude today, something on the holiness of marriage and family, on this Feastday of St Margaret of Scotland, queen, mother, wife. This is from a document of the 2nd Vatican Council. QQ. Brew. 16 Nov. p 400 t.