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13 October

## **Blessed ALEXANDRINA MARY DA COSTA** **virgin**

### **Optional Memorial**

Born on 30 March 1904 at Balasar, a small place in Portugal, Alexandrina Maria da Costa was brought up in a Christian manner by her Mamma. At seven years of age she attended elementary school for a year and a half. Lively, cheerful and physically strong she began to work in the fields.

At 14 years of age something happened which would leave its mark for the rest of her life: to escape from the attack of some evil minded men she threw herself from the window. The consequences were terrible, even though not immediate. Until she was 19 she went to church, but the paralysis continued to advance and the pain became unbearable. In 1925 she took to her bed never to get up again. Refusing to ask for a miraculous cure she believed that it was her mission “to suffer, to love, to make reparation.”

A great mystical union began with Jesus “prisoner” in all the tabernacles of the world. In 1935 for the first time she heard Jesus express his wish that the world be consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In 1938, every Friday Alexandrina relived with visible signs and movements the various stages of the passion of Jesus, while her sufferings increased as did the persecutions of the devil. At this time Fr Mariano Pinho, a Jesuit, her spiritual director, approached Pius XI directly to request the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When the request for the consecration was accepted by Pius XII in 1942, the Friday visible passion stopped and another “sign” took its place: during the last thirteen years of her life, Alexandrina did not take any more food, living solely on the Eucharist.

In 1944, at the invitation of the Salesian Fr Umberto Pasquale, her new spiritual director, she became a Salesian Cooperator. Thousands of visitors from all parts came to ask her advice and prayers. Alexandrina died on 13 October 1955. She was beatified by John Paul II on 25 April 2004.

*From the Common of virgins. Psalms of the day as in the Ordinary.*

### **Office of Readings**

#### **SECOND READING**

From the “Diary” of Blessed Alexandrina Mary da Costa, virgin

*(cf. G. AMORTH, **Behind a smile. Alexandrina Mary da Costa**,  
Cinisello Balsamo, Paoline Publications 1992, 112-115).*

*For a long time in a profound act of thanksgiving.*

While I was praying I did so with the intention of being before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament in all the tabernacles of the world, remembering also to adore the Most Holy Trinity present in my soul.

O my Jesus what happy moments! How well I felt!

I got up blind with pain and I went to the window: I couldn’t find the right position. The night was beautiful. Everything slept; the house was silent. My whole being was dead. I looked at the heavens scintillating with stars; the moon was aglow. I meditated on the beauty and greatness of my Creator. Everything I gazed at was a greater reason to wound my poor heart.

For a long time I remained in a profound act of thanksgiving to heaven. I said to Jesus: «I don't see you, I don't hear you, but I know you are my Creator, and when you created me you already knew that today I would be standing here contemplating your greatness, you already knew the lack of air I am feeling today (we are in a sultry August) would need the wind that you give me. An eternal thank you, my Jesus!»

The wind was strong: it seemed to shake everything. It made me meditate on the horrors of hell, on the life and on the torments of the damned.

Again I gazed at the heavens and the stars. I asked Jesus to multiply millions and millions of times more than the number of stars my acts of love for the tabernacles: I did not want him to be alone and I wanted him to have there only love.

My soul continues to demand solitude. It is in the shining of the stars and by the light of the moon that I all alone set myself to meditate. I ask all the stars to love Jesus for me.

In contemplating the heavens I say to him many times: «Jesus, I don't see you, but I know that you see me. I don't feel that I love you, but I trust that you love me. Allietatevi voi nel mio dolore, consolatevi voi nella mia consolazione. Heal the wound of your divine heart with the pain that the expressions of your greatness cause in mine ».

In my great pain, in the most silent hours of the night I go to contemplate the heavens. Everything is as nothing, everything is dead for me. Only the greatness of my Creator, his infinite power raised up my spirits, but leaving me always in my littleness, in my profound poverty.

Jesus, your homeland raises me up to you. I come out of my own nothingness into your things: I am great in what you have created. Thank you my Jesus, who have done everything for love of me! Jesus, when will you take me to your homeland? You created the heavens for love of me and to open the gates you shed your blood. Thank you, my Jesus. Accept my sufferings; they are all for love of you, I suffer everything to give you souls.

And I did not tire in making all my pains rise to heaven to console my Jesus, so that he could do with them whatever pleased him. Everything was silent; you could just about hear the barking of a little dog. I said: «You are praising your Creator, and I who ought to praise and love him, I am doing nothing.»

O Jesus, forgive me: I am an ungrateful person, I am worse than the beasts before you, forgive me!

The sea sang and even praised God and obeyed him keeping within its limits. My God everything obeys you; only I rebel against you, offend you and cause you displeasure. In meditating on the greatness of the Lord, on his infinite power, on the love he has for me, I could not hold back my tears.

Seeing my ingratitude and the ingratitude of the world I said: «O Jesus, I don't know why you have not already abandoned the tabernacles and flown to heaven leaving us alone on the earth. The sun obeyed you and hid itself; the night obeyed you and appears with the clear light of the moon and the stars. How beautiful all this is! And for love of me. Everything praises you; allow me to unite myself to all creatures which are now praising t you: I too want to praise you. How sad: only mankind offends you! At least I might be able to make reparation for everything ».

## RESPONSORY

**R/.** The king has desired that beauty of yours which he himself has made. \* your king is himself your bridegroom.

**V/.** He has endowed and adorned you, redeemed you and made you holy.

**R/.** your king is himself your bridegroom.

**Concluding prayer as at Morning Prayer.**

## Morning Prayer

### SCRIPTURE READING

Song 8, 7

Love is a fire no waters avail to quench, no floods to drown; for love a man will give up all that he has in the world, and think nothing of his loss.

### SHORT RESPONSORY

**R/.** Of you my heart has said: \* it is your face that I seek.

Of you my heart has said: it is your face that I seek.

**V/.** Do not hide from me O Lord:

\* it is your face that I seek.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit..

Of you my heart has said: it is your face that I seek

**Ant. At the Ben.** You have given your heart to Christ, wise virgin; now you live with him, shining like the sun in the assembly of the saints

### INTERCESSIONS

To Christ, the bridegroom and crown of virgins, with joy and gratitude we express our faith and make our requests in prayer:

*Lord Jesus, hear our prayer.*

Christ Our Lord, you united the Church your spouse to yourself to proclaim the gospel of truth and of joy through credible witness and generous dedication:

– grant that also at the moment of trial and of suffering it may never fail in its mission.

With her resolution to “love, suffer, make reparation” Blessed Alexandrina gave expression to a profound journey of faith and holiness:

– grant to all Christians the encouragement and the motivation to enoble ever sorrow and sadness that life brings with the greatest proof of love: sacrificing one’s life for the person one loves.

Blessed Alexandrina re-lived your Passion in a mystical manner and offered herself as a victim for sinners, receiving strength from the Eucharist:

– re-new in us faith and love for the table of your Body and Blood.

Eucharistic victim, small sanctuary lamp and sentinel of the tabernacle, Alexandrina cooperated in the sanctification of priests, in the conversion of sinners and peace in the world:

– grant that, experiencing the power of merciful love, with a more decisive will, we may correspond to your love and to your call.

You crowned your mother Mary as Queen of all Virgins:

– grant that by entrusting ourselves to her, following the example of Blessed Alexandrina, we may serve you with fidelity and purity of life.

Our Father

### PRAYER

Merciful God,  
who made the example of Blessed Alexandrina Mary,

so intimately united to the Passion of your Son,  
shine forth in the Church  
so that in every part of the world  
adoration of the Eucharistic and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
may be enkindled ,  
grant through her intercession,  
that we may become the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit  
and authentic witnesses to your love.  
Through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever.

## Evening Prayer

### SCRIPTURE READING

1 Cor 7, 32. 34

He who is unmarried is concerned with God's claim, asking how he is to please God; a woman who is free of wedlock or a virgin, is concerned with the Lord's claim, intent on holiness, bodily and spiritual.

### SHORT RESPONSORY

**R/.** The virgins come before the king \* They sing for joy.  
The virgins come before the king. They sing for joy.

**V/.** They enter the temple of the king.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit..  
The virgins come before the king. They sing for joy.

**Ant. At the Magn.** Come, bride of Christ,  
and receive the crown which the Lord has prepared for you.

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### INTERCESSIONS

At the close of this day, on the memorial of Blessed Alexandrina, with joy, we praise the Lord who has shown in her the wonders of his love and with we pray:  
*Show us your love O Lord.*

Lord Jesus, you bring joy to the Salesian Family on the memorial of Blessed Alexandrina:

– grant that the Salesian Cooperators and all the Family of Don Bosco may always enjoy her intercession, and following her example may follow the path of holiness.

You made Alexandrina, grow up in the “Salesian garden” as a pure and transparent young women, who defended her body the temple of the Most Holy Trinity:

– protect young people from false charms, so that they may know the blessedness of the pure in heart promised in the Gospel.

You sustained Blessed Alexandrina in the trials of illness, associating her to you redemptive Passover:

- help us to live with generosity a spirit of sacrifice in all difficult situations, with the certainty of cooperating in the coming of your Kingdom.

Renew in us the gift of your Spirit:

- may the ardour of the Eucharistic which burned in the heart of Blessed Alexandrina enflame and renew our ability to love you and to seek your will in everything.

Blessed Alexandrina did everything in her power to make devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary grow in the Church and in the world:

- grant O Lord that through the intercession of Mary, Mother of mercy, we may experience and witness to the world your merciful love.

Lord Jesus, you welcomed the holy virgins to the wedding feast of your kingdom,

- invite all the dead of the Salesian Family to the feast of eternal life.

Our Father

### PRAYER

Merciful God,  
who made the example of Blessed Alexandrina Mary,  
so intimately united to the Passion of your Son,  
shine forth in the Church  
so that in every part of the world  
adoration of the Eucharistic and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
may be enkindled ,  
grant through her intercession,  
that we may become the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit  
and authentic witnesses to your love.  
Through Our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever.