

Formation program for the Eighth Centenary of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-2007)

Year One: The life of St. Elizabeth

Month 12. Her sickness and death

During the last two or three years of her life, Elizabeth was often ill. But illness did not discourage her or keep her from the service she was dedicated to. Even when forced to go to bed, she would prepare wool for spinning.

Elizabeth became ill and was aware that she was going to die at the age of 24, but accepted this as God's will for her. The witnesses of her final illness describe her as being cheerful and deeply absorbed in prayer. She even sang in response to a bird singing on the windowsill.

When she knew that her death was near, she told her confessor, Conrad of Marburg that she "wanted to mediate on her end, and the severe judgment of the dead and her Omnipotent Judge," wanting to be able to give a just accounting of her life to him. She died on November 17, 1231.

Spiritual reflection:

Elizabeth shows us how to prepare for death with joy at the prospect of union with God.

At the time of her death, Elizabeth had already accomplished more for God in her 24 years than many people do in 80. In imitation of her, it is important for all of us to be read to give a similar accounting to God for our lives if we should die tomorrow.

"Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy." (Mt. 25:21)