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Albertina Berkenbrock

BIRTH	11 Apr 1919 Santa Catarina, Brazil
DEATH	15 Jun 1931 (aged 12) Santa Catarina, Brazil
BURIAL	Cathedral of São Luís São Luís, Município de São Luís, Maranhão, Brazil
PLOT	In the Church
MEMORIAL ID	155608483 · View Source

Blessed Albertina Berkenbrock was a Brazilian Roman Catholic virgin-martyr.

Albertina was born in São Luís, Imaruí, Santa Catarina, Brazil 11 April 1919. Her grandparents immigrated from Schöppingen, Germany to Brazil and brought with them their three children, one of who was Johann Hermann, who would become Albertina's father. Johann married Elisabeth Schmöller and the couple had nine children. They were a pious farming family that attended church regularly and lived out their faith in their daily lives.

Albertina was baptized on May 25, 1919 and confirmed on March 9, 1925. On August 16, 1928, she made her First Communion, an experience she described as the most beautiful day of her life. She also had special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Aloysius Gonzaga, a model of purity and the patron saint of São Luís.

On June 15, 1931, Maneco Palhoça, one of her father's employees, tried to rape her. She fought back, but when the attacker realized he would fail and she would identify him, he grasped her by the hair and slit her throat with a knife. He tried to cover up his crime by blaming it on another man and then fled, but was arrested. He confessed to his crime as well as two other murders. He was tried, convicted and given a life sentence. In prison he admitted to his fellow prisoners that he murdered Albertina because she resisted his rape attempts.

Shortly after her death, people began speaking of graces received through Albertina's intercession. Albertina Berkenbrock is considered a martyr in the defense of chastity. She was venerated on December 16, 2006 by Benedict XVI and was beatified on October 20, 2007. Her feast day is on June 15.

Blessed Albertina is not considered a Saint solely because she fought back against an assault. She was also beatified because during her short life, she developed a great sensitivity in her relationship with God and with the others.

She was buried in the cemetery at São Luís, but due to the fame of her martyrdom and the favours obtained through her intercession, her body was later placed in the Church of São Luís.

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