

St. George and the Dragon



St. George was a knight, born in the city of Cappadocia. One time he came to the city of Silene, in the province of Libya, where there was a dragon which was terrorizing the country. Whenever he approached the city he poisoned the people with his breath, and thereafter the people of the city gave to him every day two sheep to eat, so that he would do no harm to the people. When they ran out of sheep, he was given a man and a sheep. Then an ordinance was made that the children and young people of the town should be chosen by lottery to feed the dragon. Whoever the lot fell upon, wealthy or poor, he or she was delivered to the dragon.

One time the lot fell upon the king's daughter, and the sorrowful king said to his people, "For the love of the gods take gold and silver and all that I have, but let me have my daughter."

They said, "Sir, you have made the law, and our children are now dead, but you would do the contrary. Your daughter shall be given, or else we shall

burn you and your house."

Seeing that he could do no more, the king began to weep. Then he returned to the people and asked for eight days' respite, which they granted to him. When the eight days passed, the king had his daughter dressed like a bride, embraced and kissed her, gave her his blessing, then led her to the place where the dragon was.

When she was there Saint George passed by, and seeing the lady, he asked her what she was doing there. She said, "Go your way, fair young man, lest you perish as well."

"Tell me why you are weeping," he said. When she saw that he insisted on knowing, she told him how she had been delivered to the dragon. Then St. George said, "Fair daughter, doubt not, for I shall help you in the name of Jesus Christ."

She said, "For God's sake, good knight, go your way, for you cannot save me."

While they were talking together, the dragon appeared and came running toward them. St. George, who was on his horse, drew his sword, made the sign of the cross, and then rode swiftly toward the dragon. He struck him with his spear, injuring him severely.

"Tie your belt around the dragon's neck, and be not afraid," St. George instructed, and when she had done so the dragon followed her meekly. She led him into the city, and the people fled in fear. Saint George said to them, "Doubt not. Believe in God and Jesus Christ, and be baptized, and I shall slay the dragon."



Then the king and all his people were baptized, whereupon St. George killed the dragon and cut off his head. It took four ox-carts to remove his body from the city. The king established a church there in honor of Our Lady and of St. George, in which there flows to this day a fountain of living water that heals sick people who drink from it.

The king offered to Saint George as much money as he could count, but he refused it, asking instead that it be given to poor people for God's sake. Then he made four requests of this king: that the king should have charge of the churches, that he should honor the priests, that he should hear their service diligently, and that he should have pity on the poor people. Then Saint George took leave of the king and departed.