

Prayer to St. Werburgh

(adapted from Henry Bradshaw's *The Life of Saint Werburge of Chester*, 1521)

Blessed Werburgh, virgin bright,
descended from the blood of victors',
daughter of Wulfhere and Ermenilda,
sovereign lady, famous nun;
with heart and mind I call on you,
who are my succor in distress,
so that your prayer, sweet patroness,
will save me from the pains of hell.

O shining gem, clearer than crystal,
O blushing rose of fragrance sweet,
for love of Him you turned away
from pleasure, honor, hateful riches,
despising all false dignities;
and now, in heav'n, you reign, a queen.
Meekly I beseech you, sweet patroness,
pray for me to Christ the King.

Sovereign lady, wholly virtuous,
a mind God-full ever since your youth,
chosen to be our Savior's spouse
and profess vows at Ely house,
to observe its rules with divine grace;
so bolster me, sweet patroness,
that I may defeat the enemies of my soul.

For virtue, wisdom, God chose you,
a pillar of the monasteries,
to increase the Church by holy teaching
and vast humility; you were
an example of perfect charity,
to all your subjects a mistress kind;
help me, now, your dotting servant,
to please my maker, sweet patroness.

Glorious Abbess, flower chaste,
gemstone shining night and day,
all this region by you and your issue
ornamented now in the Eyes of God;
your bodily presence, beautiful and blessed,
gives joy to whoever is in distress.
You, our refuge, a beam of light:
succor your servants, sweet patroness.

Sweet lovely lady, I pray meekly,
that in your charity, intercession you will make
for your true servants to the Holy Trinity,
that here we may obtain His grace,
of all our sins be forgiven
and in eternal glory rest;
so help us now and forever, my sweet patroness.