



OUR SALESIAN PATRONS AND HEROES

BLESSED LAURA VICUNA

Laura Vicuña born in Chile in 1891, a contemporary of Maria Goretti, like her, knew how to bear witness to a life in which she defended her own human dignity and her Christian faith. Both of them were able to make quite astonishing decisions considering their age, resisting the assaults of depraved men in order to preserve their physical integrity and their spiritual innocence. This resistance cost Marietta her life, and Laurita had to put up with unspeakable assaults and humiliations. What makes them models to imitate is love taken to the total sacrifice of oneself, which in Laura's case was for her mother's conversion. The biography of this little Chilean girl, in fact, tells us that two years before her death she offered her life to the Lord for her mother, who in order to provide for her babies had agreed to live with the owner of an estancia (farming estate).

“A cheerful attitude will sustain you in all your difficulties, trials and sufferings in life.”

It had been the death of her father when Laura was six and the critical situation this created that forced the little family to emigrate to Junin de los Andes in Argentina, where they began to experience painful trials, but where Laura and her little sister had the good fortune to meet the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and to find a second family where they could grow up peacefully and content.



The experience at school (1900-1904), gave Laura the opportunity to discover a great friendship for Jesus and the "life of grace". Her first Communion became for her as it had been for Dominic Savio, a great turning point in her life with three resolutions that she always kept

My God I want to love you and serve you all my life; I give you my soul, my heart, my whole self.

I want to die rather than to offend you and so I intend to mortify myself in everything that might take me away from you.

I resolve to do whatever I can to make you known and loved; and to make reparation for the offenses you receive every day from people and especially from members of my own family.

It was this boundless love for God that led her to recognize the illegal union of her Mamma with a facendero as something evil, and to grow in the desire to offer herself to God for her conversion. Further unwelcome attention from the shady character living with her mother made her ill, and from this she never recovered.



Before she died Laura told her Mamma her special secret: she had offered all her sufferings and even her life so that she would leave that man forever. And in tears Mamma Mercedes, swore that she would. On January 22, 1904 Laura died, certain that she had brought her Mamma back to the right path. Her body lies in the chapel belonging to the Salesian Sisters in Bahía Blanca. At the centenary of Don Bosco's death, this chosen daughter, who had given her life for the virtue dearest to the Master, was proclaimed Blessed by John Paul II on September 3, 1988.