St. Gianna Beretta Molla

1922–1962

Feast Day:
April 28

Gianna was born into a Catholic Italian family. She had twelve siblings. When she was 20, she went to a city in Italy called Milan so that she could go to school to become a doctor. When she graduated, she opened an office. Her patients were children.

When Gianna was 33 she got married. She and her husband had four children. While Gianna was pregnant with their fourth child, Gianna grew very sick. Gianna had a tumor growing in her womb near her unborn daughter. A tumor is a growth of unhealthy cells in the body. Some tumors, like Gianna's, can be very serious. The tumor had to be removed.

Gianna had to decide what to do. Some of the ways the doctors could treat her would have killed her baby. Gianna did not want that to happen. She asked her doctors to take out the tumor, but to protect her baby.

The doctors took out the tumor, but Gianna was still sick. She knew that her doctors might have to decide between saving her, or saving her baby. She told her family she wanted her doctors to save her baby if they had to choose. Finally her little girl was born. Gianna lived for one more week and then she died. She was 39 years old.