

Blessed Maria Antonina Kratochwil
School Sister of Notre Dame
(1881-1942)
Patroness of Shalom

Sister Maria Antonina Kratochwil was born on August 21, 1881, in Witkowice by Ostrawa where her parents moved from Węgierska Górka by Żywiec, in 1879 to find work. In 1885 they returned, with their children, to the mother's homeland-Węgierska Górka, and then they settled down in Bielsko.

She entered the Congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in 1901. As candidate, and later as a professed sister, she was sent to Karwina to teach in a Polish elementary school (1906-1909; 1910-1917). After that, she was sent to Lwów where she was a teacher in 1917-1925. Later (1925-1932) she was local leader, boarding school directress and was responsible for the candidates for the congregation in Tłumacz. She was sent again to Lwów, where she was appointed directress of the school and continued the formation of candidates 1931-1939. In 1940-1942 she was local leader at Mikuliczyn.

At the beginning of World War II she was removed from school. In Mikuliczyn, Antonina and her local community were removed from their convent (February 1940-June 1941). On July 9, 1942, together with six sisters, she was arrested and put into prison in Stanisławów. Enduring inhuman conditions (hunger, beating, tortures, scoffing) she gave witness to Christian love, faith and forgiveness; she uplifted her sisters and lay co-prisoners. Five days after release from prison, she died from the consequence of tortures and the illness of typhus.

Sister Antonina was a woman of deep faith, a wise and competent teacher, and wonderful person. Sisters and lay persons who worked with her, unanimously testified that Sister Antonina possessed a boundless goodness and friendliness, a joyful love of her vocation. True serenity and peace emanated from her. She loved children, especially poor and neglected children. Sister Maria Antonina Kratochwil was beatified in the group of 108 martyrs of World War II, by Pope John Paul II, in Warsaw, on June 13, 1999.

Her feast is celebrated on June 12 of each year.