

Lives  
of  
Saints

# St Giuseppe Moscati

1880 - 1927

Feastday: 16th November



“Love the truth;  
show the person  
you are without  
guile or fear. And if  
the truth earns you  
persecution  
accept it... And if  
you must sacrifice  
yourself and your  
life for the truth, be  
strong in the  
sacrifice.”

**St Giuseppe Moscati**

S . D . C .  
S O C I E T A S  
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C H R I S T I A N Æ

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Many say that it was a pity that I died when so young, but I can assure you that I lived a fulfilled life.

I was born on 25th July 1880 in Benevento, a county some 31 miles north of Naples in Italy; we moved to Naples in 1884 and now everybody associates me with that city.

We were a large and devout Catholic family; I was seventh of nine, though some of my siblings didn't survive their childhood. These death events were marking me out for my future career and vocation.

My father was a renowned successful magistrate, but he never abandoned his Catholic values. He used to take us regularly to Mass at the nearby Poor Clares' convent. We lost his supporting presence when he died in 1897. Unfortunately he did not see me graduating as doctor of medicine in 1903 – though he really wanted me to pursue law. Every gift comes from God and I thank God for my lively intelligence. I continued my specialisations up to a professorship in new fields of research.

I also thank God for the two holy souls God put in my path to show me how to love God and neighbour more actively. In Naples I happened to meet the saintly Bartolo Longo – now widely known for his connection with Our Lady of the Rosary, and Caterina Volpicelli – a religious Sister who died in 1894 just when we moved to Naples, but whose spirituality was to affect me very positively.

The eruption of Mt Vesuvius volcano on 8th April 1906 was devastating to nearby Naples and surrounding towns. A group of dedicated people helped me tirelessly to evacuate affected hospitals and to care for the injured. Then in 1911 a cholera epidemic struck Naples causing deaths and a heavy pressure on our medical care and resources.

At University, life was not always easy as well, especially with several unbelieving colleagues, but I tried to influence my students to care for the sick and elderly in a gentle Christian manner and not for money. Indeed, they must care very generously for those who are poor.

In 1914 with outbreak of the World War, I offered to enrol in the army but I was refused in order to serve the thousands who were wounded.

During all this work, with God's grace I always kept my daily practice of prayer and the Mass. Without people knowing it, I chose not to marry in order to dedicate my life fully to God in caring for the sick and the poor for whom I spent my health which however was getting weaker. In fact I died in the afternoon of 12th April 1927 when I collapsed in my office where I was seeing patients.

For the glory of God, I was declared a doctor saint by Pope John Paul II in October 1987, and my feast day is November 16 (when I was declared Blessed by Paul VI).