

**Bl. Jutta of Thuringia**  
**(modern Germany) 1220-1260**  
*Noble woman, widow, hermit*  
*Secular Franciscan*  
*Cared for sick, particularly lepers.*  
*Prayed for the conversion of Prussia*



**Jutta von Sangerhausen (Judith)** was born around 1220 in Sangerhausen in Saxony-Anhalt (now Sachsen-Anhalt). She was married at fifteen to Baron Johannes Konopacki von Bielczna and had several children with him.

She lived amidst luxury and power, both being of noble rank, though virtue and piety, were always of prime importance to both Jutta and her husband. When they were making their way on a pilgrimage together to the holy sites in Jerusalem, Jutta's husband died. Jutta was now a widow and single mother. Each of her children entered a monastery upon reaching a suitable age which left Jutta to pursue a more austere religious way of life.

Jutta wanted to lead a life following Christ in evangelical poverty but without entering an order. After providing for her children, she disposed of her costly clothes, jewels, and furniture and became a Secular Franciscan. Jutta wore a simple garment of a religious. She lived in the vicinity of the Ulrichkirche in Sangerhausen and devoted herself to nursing according to the model of Elisabeth of Thuringia. She was also in contact with Mechthild of Magdeburg. She devoted her life to contemplation and caring for the sick, particularly lepers and tending to the poor whom she visited in their hovels. She helped the crippled and blind with whom she would share her home.

She was mocked by the towns people who laughed at how this once distinguished woman now spent her time. However, Jutta saw the face of God in the poor and felt honored to render whatever services she could.

In 1256, Jutta moved to the frontier of Christian Europe with her relative Anno von Sangerhausen, Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights Order. She chose as her base a derelict building in Bildschon (now Bielczyny), near Kulmsee (today's Chelmza) in Prussia, part of the Monastic State of the Teutonic Order, the area governed by the Teutonic Knight. There she lived as a hermit.

At the cathedral church of Kulmsee she met her patron and confessor Johannes Lobedau. He was succeeded by the Dominican Provincial Heidenreich of Kulm, who had previously been the Archbishop of Armagh in Ireland. There people approached her for counsel and prayers, and she earned the reputation of holiness. She said that there were three things that can bring one near God: painful sickness, exile from home and poverty voluntarily accepted for God. She prayed unceasingly for the conversion of the non-Christian population of the region.

Jutta died around 1260 at Kulmsee in the Monastic State of the Teutonic Order (now Chelmza, Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland). She was buried according to her wishes

in Kulmsee (Chelmza). When her bones were to be raised in 1637, they were lost. However, Jutta Chapel has been preserved at the cathedral in Kulm. A cultus developed around her immediately and the Kulmsee cathedral and Bielczyny became a destination for pilgrims. In Sangerhausen, the Jutta von Sangerhausen-Platz commemorates her today. She has been venerated for centuries as the special patron of Prussia.

Canonization: Although the procedure of the canonization of Jutta by the local bishop was carried out already 15 years after her death, the canonization in Rome did not take place, so she is considered blessed. Patroness of Prussia. (Memorial: May 5).

*There were three things that can bring one near God:  
painful sickness, exile from home and  
poverty voluntarily accepted for God.*

---

#### References:

- 1) Franciscan Media. Blessed Jutta of Thuringia. Accessed 2 May 2022.  
<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/blessed-jutta-of-thuringia>
- 2) Catholic Online. St. Jutta. Accessed 2 May 2022.  
[https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=4154](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=4154)

Note: This biography is for all desiring to grow in holiness and follow His Holiness Pope Pius XI address to 2000 nurses assembled at Castel Gondolfo on August 27, 1935 for the II World Congress of Catholic Nurses ([www.ciciams.org](http://www.ciciams.org) / [www.nacn-usa.org](http://www.nacn-usa.org)): *to first and foremost bring the Christian supernatural, Christ to our patients, bring salvation to souls.* May it also help nursing students with your Nursing History course. Source: Diana L. Ruzicka (2022). *The Book of Nurse Saints*. Available at [www.lulu.com/spotlight/Ruzicka](http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/Ruzicka)