

# Medieval Church Mothers

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*Phyllicia Mazonheimer*



Julian of Norwich

In the 1300s Julian (or Juliana) experienced visions of Christ alongside healing from an illness. She recorded her experience in Revelations of Divine Love which scholars consider one of the most significant documents of medieval Christianity.

In her writings she thinks through predestination, God's foreknowledge, and the nature of evil; she writes with intention and grace that some church scholars consider unparalleled in its day.

She was never sainted by the Catholic Church but the feast day celebrating her life is May 13.



*Lioba*

Lioba was the miracle child of aging parents. Her mother said Lioba's birth was foretold in a dream and, like Hannah in the Bible, Lioba's mother dedicated her to the service of God. Lioba began life at the abbey at Wimborne while very young. In the 8th century it was not common for women to learn reading, writing, and languages, and Lioba took advantage of studying Scripture.

Lioba was related to St Boniface, a missionary to the Germans (from whom we get the legend of Saint Nicholas Day and the practice of Christmas trees!). Boniface invited Lioba, as an adult, to come establish monasteries in Germany. She became abbess of Bischofsheim and was renowned for her biblical knowledge, wisdom, and hospitality to bishops who came to seek her counsel. She was the only woman allowed to enter monasteries and consult with church leaders. She was a friend of King Charlemagne's wife and a woman of influence her entire life until she died on September 28th, 782. Her saint day is September 28th.