
From: Matthew Tucker <matthew.tucker@buzzfeed.com>
To: londonedit <londonedit@buzzfeed.com>
Sent: 5/30/2014 4:55:42 AM
Subject: Fwd: CEN Picture Story: Saint Who Was A Bearded Lady Becomes A Tourist Attraction
Attachments: CEN_BeardedLady_01.jpg; CEN_BeardedLady_02.jpg; CEN_BeardedLady_03.jpg

Interesting Conchita story here,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: CEN Online Desk <online@cenagency.com>
Date: Fri, May 30, 2014 at 9:52 AM
Subject: CEN Picture Story: Saint Who Was A Bearded Lady Becomes A Tourist Attraction
To: test <online@cenagency.com>

Central European News www.cen.at/www.europics.at

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NB: CEN_BeardedLady_01-03.jpg sent to pic desk: Also available from www.europics.at

(starts)

An Austrian museum that has a rare statue of an unusual saint which is actually a woman with a beard has been flooded with visitors ever since Austria's Conchita Wurst won the Eurovision Song Contest.

According to legend, Saint Wilgefortis lived in the 14th century and her name derives from the old German word for "holy face".

Although she was almost unknown until Conchita Wurst scored her Eurovision victory, Saint Wilgefortis is listed in the standard Catholic list of saints, she has an official feast day, as well as bewildering array of aliases, among them Liberata, Kummernis, Uncumber, and Livrade.

She became a saint over the story that she was the daughter of a king, who had taken a vow of virginity after secretly converting to Christianity. When her father wanted to marry her off to the King of Sicily, she prayed for deliverance from this evil fate, whereupon she grew a beard. Because no self-respecting king would want to marry a bearded princess, the marriage was cancelled and a father was so angry that he had her crucified.

She was venerated by people seeking relief from tribulations, in particular by women who wished to be freed from abusive husbands.

The director of the Museum in Horn, a small town in Lower Austria, Toni Kurz, said: "We have had the relics including the statue and information about the saint for some time but now it's become a massive attraction. As a way of ending a marriage, the way she chose was a bit extreme. Apparently it took three days to die on the cross."

He said that they had given their exhibition a modern facelift including some information with pictures about Conchita Wurst.

He added: "The exhibition is expected to end this October but who knows, if we keep getting this many visitors we might go on for longer. I'm hoping as well that Conchita Wurst might make a visit. Who knows, we might even take the exhibition on tour."

(ends)

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