

## MASSES FOR ST. LUCY

SICILIANS IN SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO  
MARTYR OF SYRACUSE.

New Statue of Patroness of Sight  
to Be Dedicated at Holy  
Rosary Church.

The Catholic church Monday will observe the feast of St. Lucy, patroness of sight. The day will be celebrated with special devotion by the Sicilian people of this city because, among them, St. Lucy is second only to St. Joseph in popularity.

Nine masses will be held at the Holy Rosary Catholic church and persons of Sicilian ancestry from all parts of the city will take part in the services in fulfillment of vows already made. They will renew pledges and petitions to St. Lucy to protect their eyes.

## SEEKS TO PLEASE MOTHER.

Lucy was born in Syracuse, Sicily about the year 283, of a wealthy and noble family. Her father died while she was still a young girl and she was left in the care of her mother. Lucy had consecrated herself to God and hoped to spend her life in His service. However, her mother desired her to marry and Lucy was betrothed to a young man against her wishes.

Before the marriage, however, Lucy's mother made a pilgrimage to Catania, where the relics of St. Agatha had been enshrined, hoping she might be cured of a hemorrhage from which she had suffered for many years. The cure was effected in 303 and Lucy, in thanksgiving, went about distributing her wealth among the poor.

At that time the persecution of Diocletian was under way. The rejected suitor reported Lucy's activities to the governor of Sicily and the girl was subjected to many indignities and abuses. An attempt even was made to burn her but miraculously the flames did not touch her.

## HER VISION RESTORED.

It is said that the young man to whom she had been betrothed was spellbound by her beautiful eyes, and in order to dispel his interest and attention, Lucy plucked out her eyes and cast them away. Later her sight was restored by God, and for this reason she has been chosen by the church as patroness of eyesight.

A new statue of St. Lucy will be blessed and dedicated on St. Lucy's day at the Holy Rosary church. It was donated by her many devotees.

A traditional custom is observed by the Sicilians on St. Lucy's day. In the place of bread, the devout eat a porridge made of whole wheat grain and water, in fulfillment of a vow made many years ago. When Sicily was in the midst of famine, the people prayed to St. Lucy, their patroness, and on her feast day, December 13, several ships arrived carrying wheat.

The half-starved people rushed to the boats and, without taking the trouble to mill the wheat and make bread, they cooked it with water and ate it, making a vow bread never would be eaten on St. Lucy's day. This porridge is called "Cucia," and it will be found on the table of every Sicilian family. Approximately 85 per cent of the Italian people in Kansas City are of Sicilian descent.